

# TOWN OF TERRY GROWTH POLICY



# Acknowledgements

The Terry Growth Policy was made possible by the effort, dedication, and insight of several people. They include Mayor Ron Kiosse, Town Council President Rolane Christofferson and Town Councilors Clinton Rakes, Fred Rambur, and Teneil Phipps.

The Terry Planning Board members generously offered their time and expertise to this project. The members include Chairman Larry Keltner, Vice Chair Heather Carter, Charles Deisher, Keith Olson, Elden Netzer, Elizabeth Smith, and Teneil Phipps (Town Council Representative), in addition to former members Diane Ehman (past County Rep.) and Kathy Hickman (past Council Rep.).

Other community members who provided critical information and insight include Parker Powell, Evelyn Haidle, Town Clerk Lynn Strasheim, Sheriff Bill Kunder, Public Works Director Jared Davis, Town Attorney Becky Convery, Prairie County Commissioner Todd Devlin, Tracey Feickert, Sheryl Morast, Dale Galland, Casey Klasna, and Renee Clark.

Thanks also go out to Executive Director Jason Rittal of the Eastern Plains Economic Development Corporation for securing and administering a grant to help fund the project, to the Montana Department of Commerce Community Technical Assistance Division and Main Street program for providing grant funding, and to Andrew Hagemeier and Dave DeGrandpre of Land Solutions for writing, mapping, and providing guidance along the way.



RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_

**A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF TERRY, MONTANA TO ADOPT THE PROPOSED  
TOWN OF TERRY GROWTH POLICY**

WHEREAS, pursuant Montana Code Annotated 76-1-101, the Town Council of the Town of Terry, Montana created and appointed a planning board in October of 2011 with the purpose of creating a growth policy for the Town's future; and

WHEREAS, from October of 2011 to January of 2013, the Town of Terry Planning Board worked to prepare a growth policy that meets the requirements of Montana Code Annotated 76-1-601 while pursuing policies for the betterment of the Town's future; and

WHEREAS, at a duly noticed public hearing on January 8, 2013, after considering the verbal and written recommendations and suggestions of interested parties, the Town of Terry Planning Board recommended the Town Council of Terry, Montana adopt the Terry Growth Policy and to pursue the goals, objectives, and policies therein; and

WHEREAS, on \_\_\_\_\_, 2013, the Town Council of Terry, Montana passed a RESOLUTION OF INTENTION to adopt the Terry Growth Policy and, after further consideration and review, have voted to adopt the Terry Growth Policy and to pursue the goals, objectives, and policies therein.

NOW THEREFORE, the Town Council of Terry, Montana, hereby passes a RESOLUTION to adopt the Terry Growth Policy, and to pursue the goals, objectives, and policies therein.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2013, with the Town Council of Terry, Montana voting as follows:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

\_\_\_\_\_  
MAYOR

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
TOWN CLERK



RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_

**A RESOLUTION OF INTENTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF TERRY, MONTANA TO ADOPT THE  
TOWN OF TERRY GROWTH POLICY**

WHEREAS, pursuant Montana Code Annotated 76-1-101, the Town Council of the Town of Terry, Montana created and appointed a planning board in October of 2011 with the purpose of creating a growth policy for the Town's future; and

WHEREAS, from October of 2011 to January of 2013, the Town of Terry Planning Board worked to prepare a growth policy that meets the requirements of Montana Code Annotated 76-1-601 while pursuing policies for the betterment of the Town's future; and

WHEREAS, at a duly noticed public hearing on January 8, 2013, after considering the verbal and written recommendations and suggestions of interested parties, the Town of Terry Planning Board recommended the Town Council of Terry, Montana adopt the Terry Growth Policy and to pursue the goals, objectives, and policies therein.

NOW THEREFORE, the Town Council of Terry, Montana, hereby passes a RESOLUTION OF INTENTION to adopt the Terry Growth Policy, and to pursue the goals, objectives, and policies therein.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2013, with the Town Council of Terry, Montana voting as follows:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

\_\_\_\_\_  
MAYOR

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_ TOWN CLERK



**PLANNING BOARD RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING BOARD OF THE TOWN OF TERRY, MONTANA TO  
RECOMMEND ADOPTION OF THE TOWN OF TERRY GROWTH POLICY**

WHEREAS, pursuant Montana Code Annotated 76-1-101, the Town Council of the Town of Terry, Montana created and appointed a planning board in October of 2011 with the purpose of creating a growth policy for the Town's future; and

WHEREAS, from October of 2011 to the present, the Town of Terry Planning Board has worked to prepare a growth policy that meets the requirements of Montana Code Annotated 76-1-601 while pursuing policies for the betterment of the Town's future; and

WHEREAS, notice of a public hearing on the proposed growth policy was published as required by Montana Code Annotated 76-1-602; and

WHEREAS, on January 8, 2013, the Town of Terry Planning Board held a public hearing on the proposed Terry Growth Policy; and

WHEREAS, after considering the recommendations and suggestions elicited at the public hearing, the Town of Terry Planning Board recommended the Town Council of Terry, Montana to adopt the Terry Growth Policy and to pursue the goals, objectives, and policies therein.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Town of Terry Planning Board, to recommend that the Terry Town Council adopt the Terry Growth Policy, and to pursue the goals, objectives, and policies therein.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED this \_\_\_\_ day of January, 2013, with the Town of Terry Planning Board voting as follows:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

\_\_\_\_\_ Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_ Vice Chair



# Executive Summary

The Town of Terry is a small, eastern Montana community nestled between Interstate 94 and the Yellowstone River, equidistant from Miles City and Glendive. Terry is the seat of Prairie County and is rich in history. Like much of eastern Montana, Terry's population has declined over the past 60 years due to a reduction in the agricultural labor force and an increase in economic opportunities elsewhere. Terry now has a significant aging population; there are fewer young families and fewer kids in the schools than there were just 20 years ago. Jobs are not easy to come by, the housing stock has continued to deteriorate, and there are few rentals. Without a concerted effort and some luck, Terry's population is likely to continue to decline, which is a threat to local businesses and quality of life.

Fortunately, Terry has many assets to capitalize on. The Yellowstone River, scenic badlands, and nearby public lands; the agricultural economy and solid commodity prices; the town's history and preservation efforts; the traditional downtown and well-maintained park and, most importantly, the friendly, active people who are engaged in community efforts.

This growth policy is, among other things, a strategy to help grow the community and keep it vital. This document proposes an interconnected effort to support current residents and attract new ones.

Terry's strategy is based on four pillars. The pillars are:

- 1 . To maintain and develop infrastructure that helps the town function;
- 2 . To preserve and enhance the town's unique character;
- 3 . To make use of and build on the Town's amenities; and
- 4 . To help support the efforts of the people.

The Town hopes that by taking action and adopting the policies proposed in this plan, Terry will prosper and continue to be a friendly and vital small town, rich in heritage, natural resources, and people.



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# Chapter One: Terry's Vision



# Vision Statement

Terry is a small, rural community located at the junction of Hwy 253 and Old Highway 10, just off I-94. Surrounded by rugged buttes known as badlands, Terry sits on the south bank of the Yellowstone River. A picturesque town made up of friendly faces and tree-lined streets, Terry is famous for its rustic, homespun hospitality. It is a town that despite its close proximity to the interstate has remained largely unaffected by outside change over the years, due in part to the predominance of public lands within the county. Many of the houses, and a majority of the shops, are buildings that were constructed at the turn of the century by family members of people who still live here.

Terry residents have effectively maintained a stable quality of life and values defined by early homesteaders, perpetuated by today's farmers and ranchers. Community members recognize that while Terry may not achieve "regional center" status, the town has as great deal to offer in terms of culture, ambiance, and recreational opportunities.

**Terry will reach its full potential by investing in its heritage; utilizing its current assets to capitalize on growth opportunities; continuing to support the Terry Public School system and activities that engage youth, and providing care and services to its citizenry. Terry embraces progress as a way to keep the community vital. The town encourages families to put down roots in the community and invites businesses and entrepreneurs to expand their opportunities here, while ensuring that established residents continue to enjoy the life they love.**

The above Vision Statement is intended to describe what this growth policy is trying to achieve. In essence, if someone asked, "What do you want Terry to be like in 20 years?" the Vision Statement would provide the answer.

The goals, objectives, and policies that are detailed in Chapter 5 of this plan support the vision. Increasingly focused, they provide detailed descriptions of how to reach the future desired state. The implementation actions in Chapter 7 detail the precise steps and timing that is planned to move the community forward.



# Chapter Two: About the Growth Policy



# Purpose of the Growth Policy

A growth policy is a long-range plan that guides development and public policy decisions affecting the physical, environmental, economic, and social characteristics of a community. A community's ability to adopt a growth policy was established by the State of Montana. A community is not required to have a growth policy, but there are advantages to a community that has one.

First of all, just as a disorganized person may have difficulty accomplishing much, a disorganized community may have the same problem. A growth policy provides organization and direction for a community. A growth policy encourages a community to think about what it wants to accomplish, and also when and how to get things done. It requires a community to reflect upon itself and think about its best interests. A well-organized community that has a plan for how it wants to move forward can foster good growth and accomplish great things.

A growth policy can help build a small town's infrastructure. Small towns often lack the resources required to maintain or improve essential infrastructure like water and sewer systems, schools, and roads. Infrastructure like this is critical for a small town aspiring to grow; having a growth policy is often a key consideration when securing financial assistance. Would you want to give your money to a community that is disorganized and has no plan for the future? This organization and forethought is considered a plus by funding agencies when deciding how to distribute grants and assistance.

A growth policy can also open doors for a community by promoting community dialogue and participation. It can provide a path for a community looking to change its direction. It can help to guide growth and development that may occur.

A growth policy will not produce immediate major changes to a community, but it will help provide the tools and good planning necessary to make changes over time. A growth policy is not a substitute for action; steps will need to be taken long after the plan is adopted. A growth policy is not a substitute for regulation; a growth policy has no authority to regulate but, if regulations are needed, they should be adopted after being considered in the growth policy. A growth policy should not be for a limited or single purpose; it should consider a variety of community goals. A growth policy is also not written in stone; it should be revised and updated as conditions and situations change.





# How to Use the Growth Policy

A growth policy is a living document, which means it is to be used and periodically adjusted. Do not let this document sit idle on a shelf. Its goals, objectives, and policies are intended to guide the development of a vibrant and thriving Terry. Not everyone will use this document in the same way. Listed below is some general guidance on how people will use the growth policy depending upon their role in the community.

## ***Elected Officials***

Terry's elected officials will use the growth policy as a guide for making decisions on land use, infrastructure, and other actions that will affect Terry's development. You'll often hear people use the phrase, "It's a matter of public policy." This is where many of Terry's policies are written down. It is important for elected officials, making decisions relevant to community development, to review this document and consider if their decisions are supported by the policies within.

## ***Town Staff***

Larger communities have planning staff tasked with making recommendations and basic decisions on land use to appointed boards and elected officials. The Planners are the community's growth policy experts. Terry may not regularly require the services of a traditional certified planner, and many planning duties will likely fall upon the Town Clerk. The Town Clerk may occasionally be asked to make recommendations or make some basic decisions on land use. In those situations, the growth policy can be used as a guide. From time to time, the Clerk may be asked to send letters of support for community organizations or other governing bodies pursuing grant funding. The growth policy can demonstrate the community's support for projects in those situations.



## ***Appointed Boards***

The members of Terry's Planning Board should each have a copy of the growth policy and know how it relates to land use and community projects. They will be charged with making recommendations to elected officials. This document will be a useful tool and, in certain instances, e.g. zoning, should be the basis for specific recommendations.

## ***Community Leaders***

The growth policy can be used by leadership of community organizations, school districts, non-profits, or even individuals who are looking to further the cause of a better Terry. For example, when initiating a new promotional program, the Chamber of Commerce can show the town government supports their efforts through the goals and policies outlined in the town's growth policy. The hospital administrator, when trying to add facilities, can demonstrate the town has planned out the land use for the hospital's facilities. The school board, when applying for a grant for improvements to the school, can demonstrate community support for the District.

## ***The General Public***

The people of Terry are not expected to learn the ins and outs of the growth policy, but there may be a time when the growth policy will be important to them. People in Terry should know about the growth policy and should know where to access it, and who to ask for help in using it. They should know the growth policy is a vision for the community and that it has been adopted to help the community grow. They should demand Terry's government make decisions based upon it and take actions to implement it.

# Relationship to Other Adopted Planning Documents

## ***Zoning Ordinance***

Communities may choose to adopt zoning regulations by ordinance. For Terry, when zoning is considered for adoption or revisions, the governing body must review the growth policy to ensure the zoning is generally in accordance with the goals, objectives, and policies. In addition, the zoning map must reflect the future land use map in Chapter 6, Page 61 (figure 25).





## ***Subdivision Regulations***

Like zoning regulations, subdivision regulations must be consistent with this plan. A review of the growth policy must be done when subdivision regulations are adopted or amended to ensure the regulations are in accordance with the growth policy. However, it is important to note according to state law, a growth policy cannot not be used solely as a reason to deny a subdivision or place conditions on a subdivision's approval. Montana Code Annotated 76-3-608(3)(a) provides primary review for evaluating subdivision proposals. These criteria are defined, and a discussion of how they will be used in evaluating subdivision proposals is located in Chapter 7. Chapter 7 also includes a discussion of how public hearings on preliminary subdivision proposals will be conducted.

## ***Relationship of the Growth Policy to Additional Plans***

Growth policies cover a variety of topics and do not always dive deeply into specifics. The governing body may choose to develop and adopt more specific planning documents related to community resources or issues. These additional planning documents are generally adopted as addendums to the growth policy. They must be generally consistent with the growth policy, and their adoption and amendment procedures must follow the same statutes as growth policies. Examples of additional planning documents can be, but are in no way limited to:

- Capital Improvement Plans
- Parks and Recreation Plans
- Neighborhood or Special District Plans (e.g., central business district)
- Transportation Plans
- Historic Preservation Plans
- Disaster and Emergency Response Plans





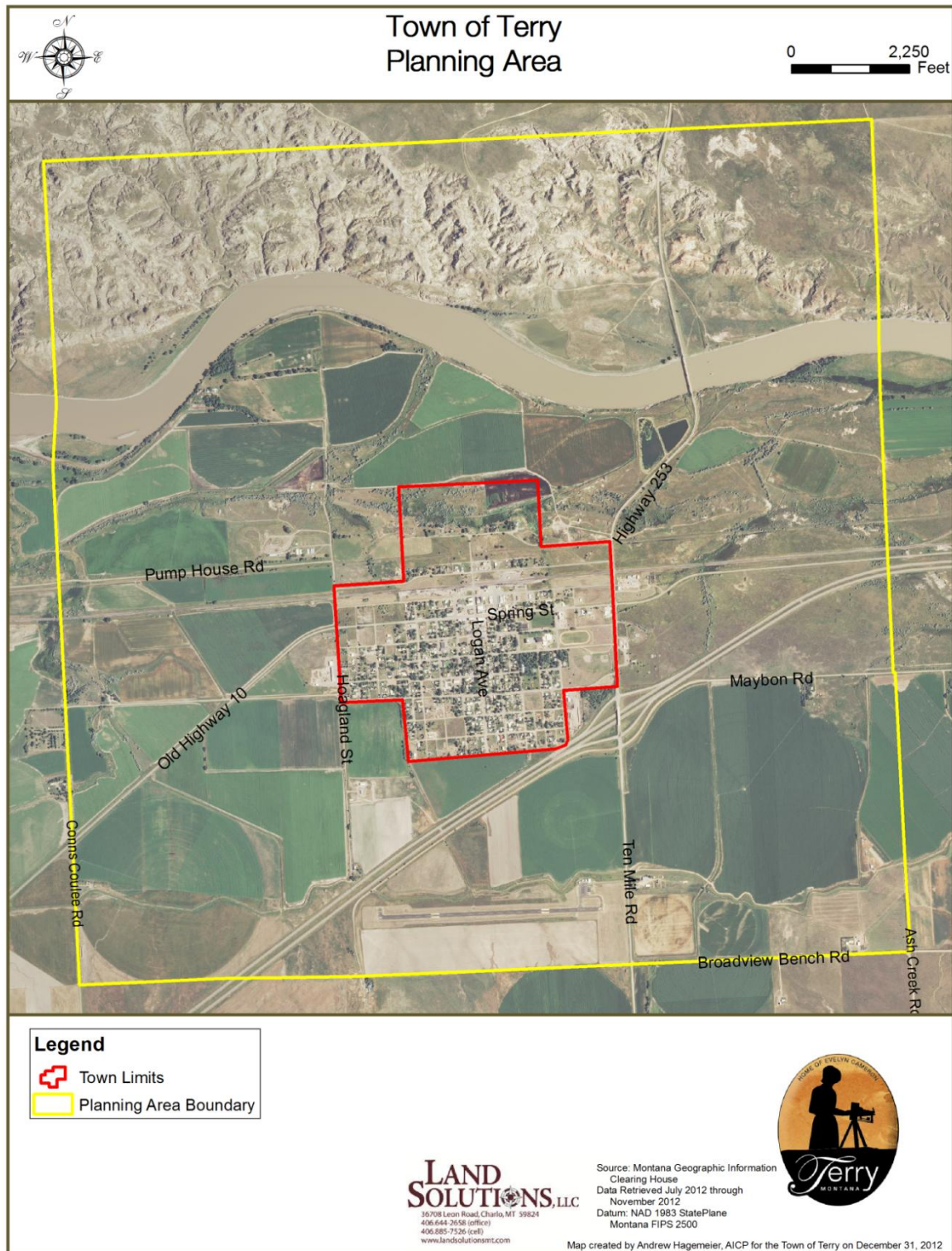
**Figure 1. The badlands just outside of Terry.**

## Planning Area, Coordination with Prairie County

The area in which the Town of Terry has jurisdiction over planning decisions corresponds to the Town Limits. As the Town Limits change, so does the planning jurisdiction. However, this plan contemplates and provides guidance on future land uses in the immediate vicinity – within mile of the Town Limits – that only become binding when accepted by Prairie County or when property is annexed by the Town. In such cases, the proposed land uses should be consistent with this plan.

The map on the following page (figure 2) shows the Town Limits of Terry in RED and the Planning Area in YELLOW. This map is for illustrative purposes only as the Town limits will likely change over the life of the growth policy. Because the Town of Terry and Prairie County are inextricably linked, the Town will continue to communicate and work closely with the County regarding land use, economic development, and planning matters.





**Figure 2. Map: Town of Terry Planning Area.**



# Planning Process and Public Outreach

## ***Planning Process***

Below is timeline of events in the Development of the Town of Terry's Growth Policy

- The Town's elected officials and staff first started discussing the idea of a creating growth policy in the fall of 2011.
- On October 11, 2011 the Town Council passed a motion to begin the process of creating a growth policy, and appointed people to a Planning Board who would lead the effort.
- On October 19, 2011 the Planning Board held its first meeting and continued to meet and develop portions of the growth policy for the next several months.
- With assistance from the Eastern Plains Economic Development Corporation, in May of 2012 consulting planners with Land Solutions were brought in to help the Planning Board volunteers develop the growth policy. The Planning Board provided direction to Land Solutions at open meetings through the summer and fall.
- Land Solutions presented the first draft of the growth policy to the Planning Board in November of 2012 and the second draft in December of 2012.
- The Terry Planning Board held a public hearing on the growth policy on January 8.
- The Terry Planning Board adopted by Resolution a recommendation to the Terry Town Council to adopt the Terry Growth Policy.
- In January and February of 2013, the Terry Town Council adopted a Resolution of Intention and a final Resolution to adopt the Terry Growth Policy

## ***Public Outreach***

- All meetings held by the Planning Board have been properly posted and open to the public. The Planning Board holds a public comment period at every meeting.
- During this process, about two dozen town officials, county officials, business owners, and public leaders were interviewed regarding the development of this plan.





- On March 21, 2012, the Terry Tribune printed a guest opinion by the Mayor informing the public of the work done to create Terry's Growth Policy; it noted the benefits of a growth policy. The article encouraged residents to ask questions and provide comments.
- On October 3, 2012 the Terry Tribune printed a guest opinion by a member of the Planning Board informing the public of work related to the development of the growth policy and zoning issues.
- There have been numerous other articles regarding land use planning issues printed in the Terry Tribune since the fall of 2011 but not specifically addressing this process.



# Chapter Three: Existing Conditions, Trends, and Forecasts





# Introduction

Chapter Three, “Existing Conditions, Current Trends, and Forecasts” is the foundation on which the growth policy is built. Heavy in demographic data, statistics, and observations from the community, this chapter establishes baseline conditions for the Town of Terry - a snapshot of what Terry was when this document was written. In this chapter the reader will find a description of Terry’s population, workforce, housing conditions, infrastructure, and economy. This chapter identifies trends and provides comparisons in order to understand what the data may mean. Finally, this chapter makes some assumptions and forecasts about what may happen to Terry’s population and thus the community and economy over the life of this plan.



**Figure 3. Scenes from around Terry**

## Physical Setting and Town History

The Town of Terry is nestled between I-94 and the Yellowstone River, 39 miles east of Miles City and 41 miles west of Glendive. In 1877, buffalo hunter J.W. Montague – believed to be the first settler of Terry – built a dugout shelter about two miles south of the present day site of Terry. The settlement, a supply point for freighters travelling on the Yellowstone, became known as Joubert’s Landing, but was renamed Terry in 1880 after General Alfred H. Terry, overall commander of a six year campaign against the Sioux.<sup>1</sup> Terry became a railroad town when the Northern Pacific Railway’s transcontinental line arrived in 1881.<sup>2</sup> Terry was incorporated in 1910.

The Terry Badlands Wilderness Study Area provides a dramatic backdrop with camping and hiking opportunities along established trails. The Calypso Trail road northwest of Terry brings visitors into the famed badlands. The Yellowstone River near Terry is an easy-floating river, with abundant western scenery and wildlife.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://visitterrymontana.com/about-terry-mt/history-of-terry-montana/>

<sup>2</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terry,\\_Montana](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terry,_Montana)





Terry is located in the heart of agate country, where people come from all over the United States to hunt along the rivers, creeks, and nearby hills to gather the translucent rocks, which are used for jewelry, wind chimes, lamp shades, and coffee tables.<sup>3</sup>

From Terry, it is a short trip to the famed base camp area of the Custer Expedition and the graves of soldiers who died from wounds received in the Battle of the Little Bighorn, or to where the Far West Steamboat docked at Terry Landing. Thirty five miles north of Terry is the location of the last battle between General Miles and Sitting Bull. The Custer Creek (Saugus) train wreck, the worst rail disaster in Montana history, occurred near Terry in 1938.

Visitors can also discover Terry's history at the Prairie County Museum and Evelyn Cameron Gallery. The Cameron Gallery displays large, crisp copies of the photographs that have since made Evelyn Cameron famous. The collection is a stunning portrayal of the everyday lives of the early eastern Montana homesteaders. Evelyn Cameron Heritage, Inc. is in the process of converting Terry's old Rialto Theater in to the *Evelyn Cameron Heritage Center* in order to display hundreds of her original photographs and documents.

The Prairie County Museum is housed in the old State Bank of Terry and is filled with horse and buggy equipment, pioneer household, and business antiques. A dentist office, barber shop, butcher shop, one-room school, library, hospital room, laundry, kitchen, dining room, and bedroom date back to the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## Demographic Profile

### ***Population***

People are the greatest resource in any community. Terry is no different. The people who live in any town or city – how many, what age, how they live – will have an impact on the physical characteristics of the buildings and streets, shops and stores, and houses and schools. Having a basic understanding of today's demographic composition – who lives here, where they live, how old they are – will help community leaders make decisions about what services are needed, and where, for tomorrow's Terry.

Demographic data is seemingly endless. The 2010 US Census is the primary resource for this plan, but other resources have been consulted. Sifting through the data, the following two observations seemed most relevant in affecting how Terry is going to grow over the life of this document:

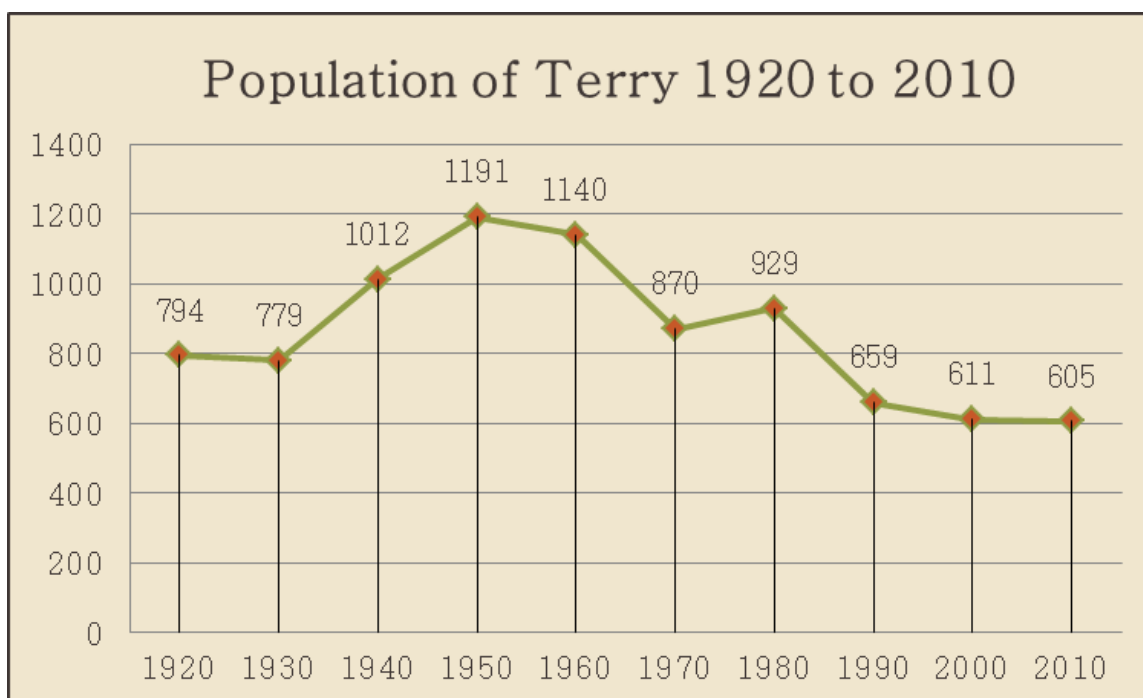
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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.prairiecommunityhospital.org/?p=39>



- Terry's population has experienced decades of decline
- The percentage of Terry's population over the age 65 is double that of the State of Montana

**DECADES OF DECLINE:** The Town of Terry has been struggling with a declining population for generations (figure 4). In 1950, when the world was a different place, Terry had almost 1,200 residents. Over the past 60 years, every decade a few more houses have been boarded up, and a few more families left town. An oil boom in the 1970s resulted in a temporary bump, but it was short lived. Over the past three decades the downward population trend has been leveling out.



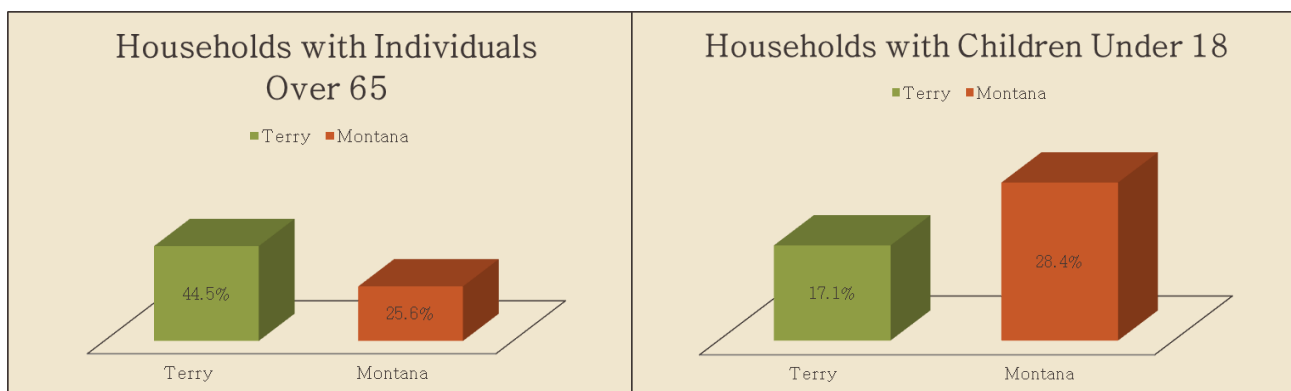
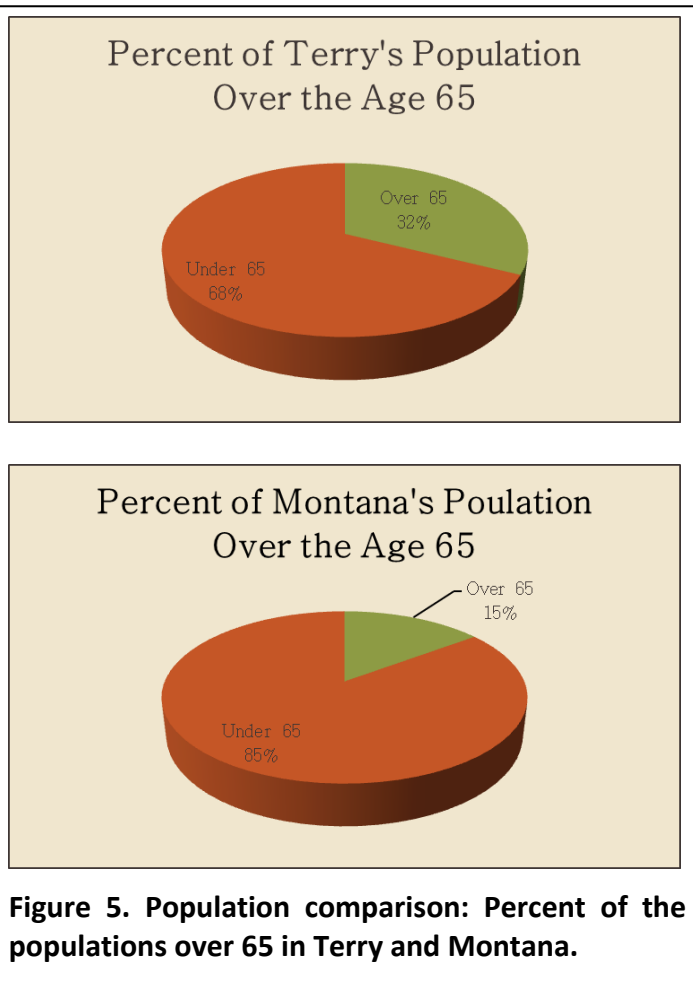
**Figure 4. Population of Terry, 1920 to 2010.**

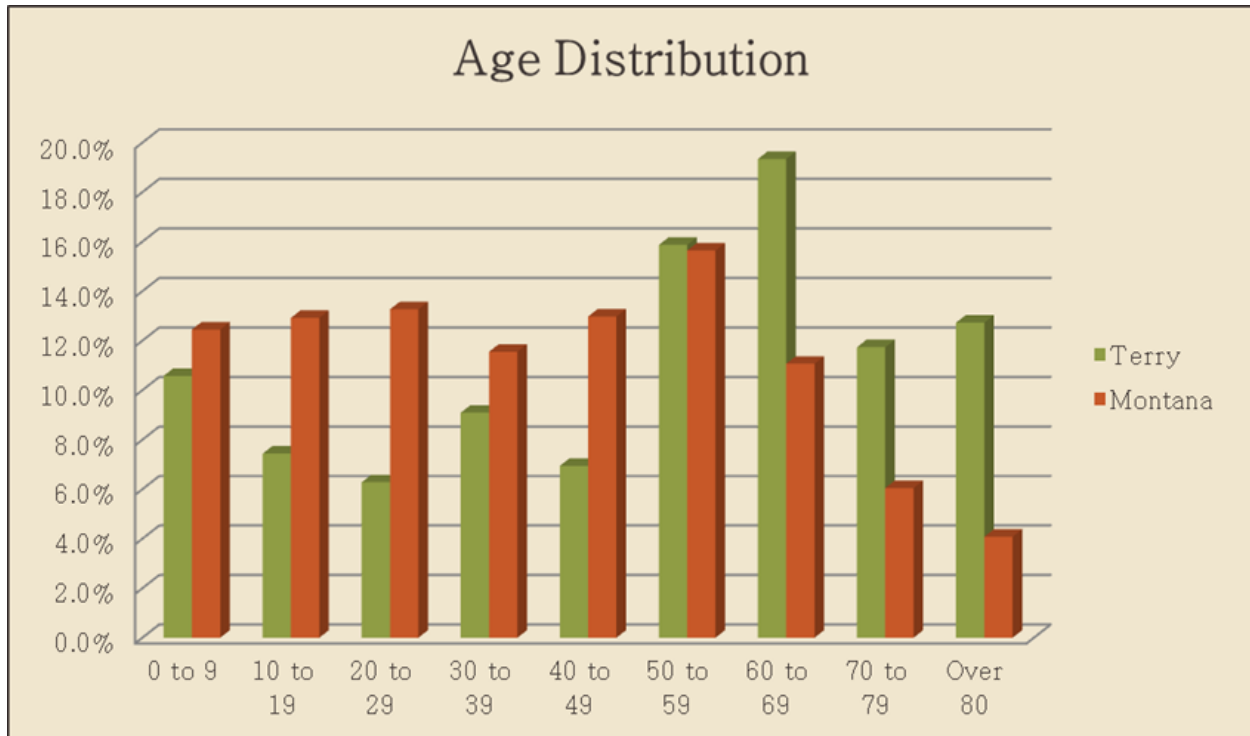
**AN AGING POPULATION:** Along with a declining population, Terry's population is much older than both the State of Montana and the Country as a whole (figures 5, 6 and 7). An elderly population has an entirely different set of needs and requirements for services than a young population.



One of the challenges facing Terry's aging population is transitional housing. Currently, Prairie Community Hospital offers long-term care for patients. Occupancy rates in the long-term facilities are at 97%. Interviews with city employees, volunteers serving on boards and elected officials indicate there is a need for housing that will provide a transition from independent living to assisted living.

Another issue has to do with volunteerism. Many of Terry's active volunteers, who support community projects and events, are getting older. It will be imperative to encourage the spirit of volunteerism within the younger population.





**Figure 7. Population comparison: Age distribution in Terry and Montana.**

As seen in figure 7, the age distribution of Terry is much different than the State of Montana. Simply put, there are far fewer young people living in Terry than the law of averages would suggest.

## ***Housing***

**A DECLINING HOUSING STOCK:** It is not surprising that with an aging and shrinking population, the quantity and quality of Terry's housing stock is in decline. According to local real estate professionals, people looking to purchase a home in Terry are seeking well-kept homes not needing major repairs. The market price of these homes is less than what it would cost to build a new home, and less than what it would cost to purchase a decayed house and repair it. Unfortunately, there are not enough of these homes to meet current demand and programs are not generally available to renovate abandoned homes at the scale needed to meet the demand in Terry. As a result, the only remedy for the current decline is an upward price correction in the market, which already seems to be occurring to some degree.



## Terry Housing Statistics

- Total Housing Units: 357
- Occupied Housing Units: 292
- Owner Occupied Housing Units: 236
- Vacant Housing Units: 65
- Seasonal or Occasional Use Housing Units: 22
- Percentage of housing units that are apartments: 6%

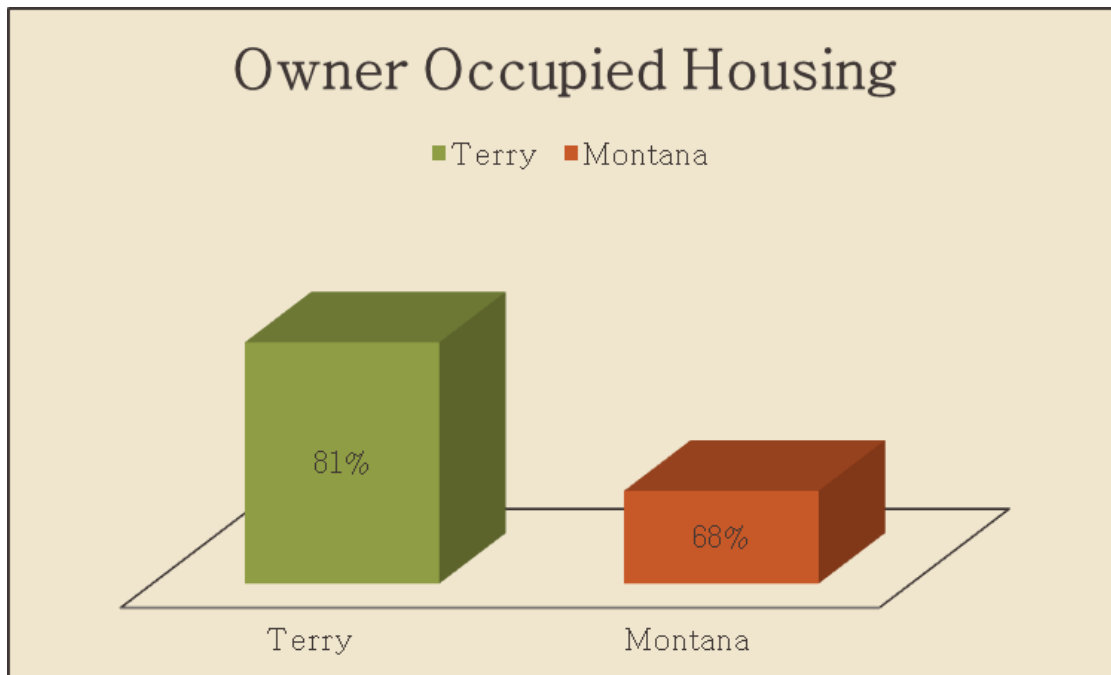


**Figure 8. There are many well cared for homes throughout Terry's tree-lined neighborhoods.**

Some good news about Terry's housing: Terry has a much higher percentage of owner occupied housing than the state (figure 9). People who are invested in a home are invested in their community. But there is a down side: If Terry's housing prices rise, rents will likely continue to increase, making it harder for teachers and young families to find an affordable place to live. While it's good to have high owner occupancy, it would also be nice to have a larger rental supply.



In addition to vacant houses, there are large portions of the town where the infrastructure is in place, but the land is vacant. This is a challenge, but also an opportunity for the community.



**Figure 9. Housing comparison: Percentage of owner occupied housing in Terry and Montana.**





**A TALE OF TWO HOUSING STOCKS:** According to ratings established by the Montana Department of Revenue, 3% of the surveyed housing stock is considered to be in a Very Poor condition, 20% is rated in Fair condition, 64% in Average condition and 12% in Good or Excellent Condition (figures 10 and 11). This “Average or Good” stock is what sells in Terry and seems to be driving market prices. As a result, when a home falls vacant, or is not maintained, this brings downward pressure to the point where the cost of repairing the home is greater than the cost of one of the houses in “good to fair” condition.

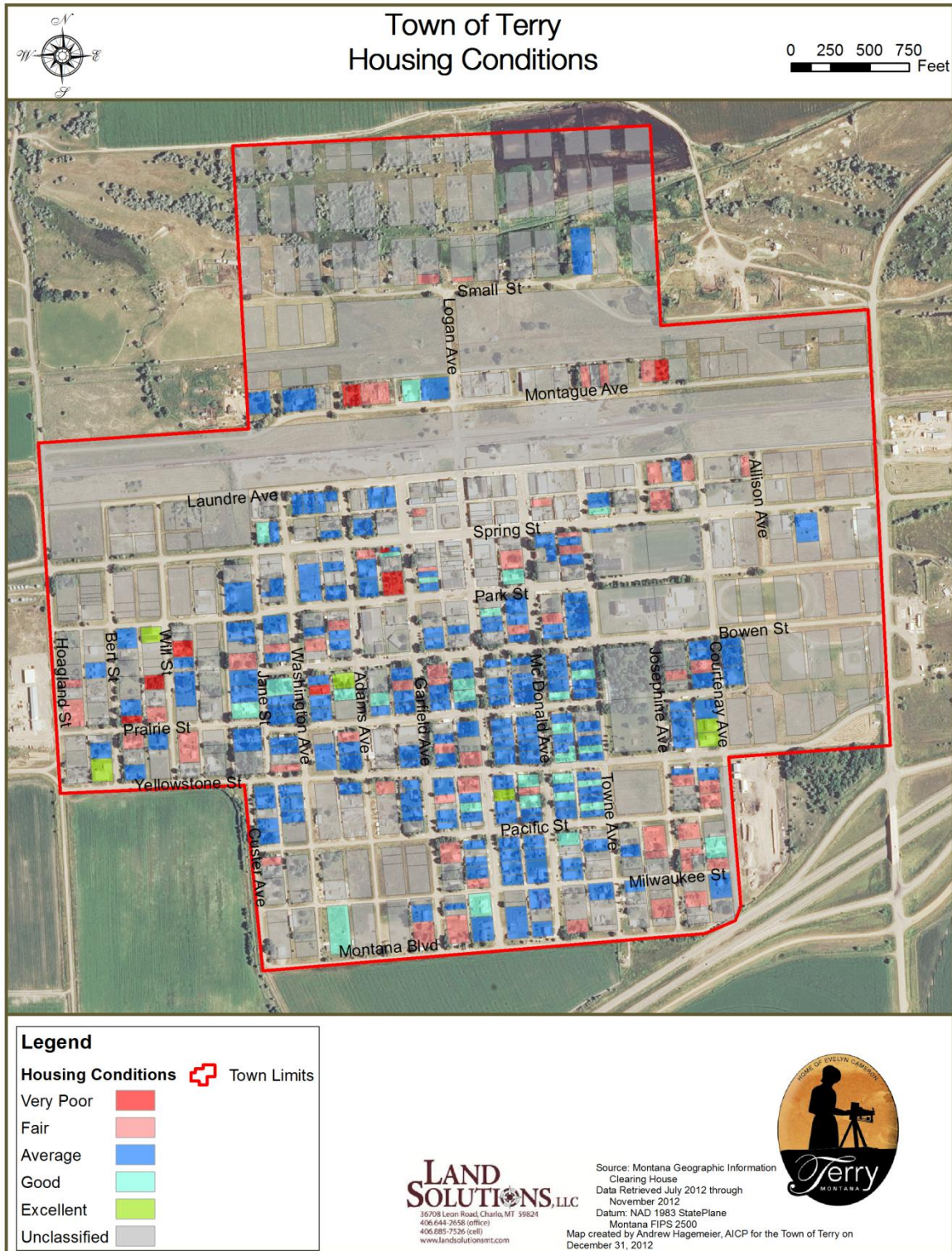


**Figure 10. Contrast of housing conditions found in Terry.**

Homeownership for seasonal use, such as fall hunting, also limits the availability of housing for permanent residents. Seasonal housing impacts housing prices and does not generally improve the quality of the community’s housing stock. However, seasonal residents pay property taxes and require little in the way of public services so can benefit the community.







**Figure 11: Map: Housing conditions in the Town of Terry.**





# Public Infrastructure

Infrastructure is the bricks and mortar of Terry. Roads, sidewalks, parks, schools, water, and sewer are all a part of Terry's infrastructure. A community with good infrastructure can use it to their advantage when trying to attract business and people to town.

- Schools
  - 147 K-12 Students
  - 20% Rate in Teacher Turnover
  - Room to expand: High school once had over 200 students
  - The school is considered by many to be the heart of the community
- Law Enforcement
  - Terry contracts with Prairie County
  - 3 full time officers, 3 deputies
  - Good communications infrastructure, Enhanced 911
  - 2011 saw a 30% increase in call volume
  - Increase is mainly coming from interstate traffic, not from Terry
- Public Facilities
  - Town Hall/Fire Station
  - City Park and Pool
  - 3 paid employees
    - City Clerk
    - Public Works Director
    - Public Works Employee

- Solid Waste
  - Town of Terry provides garbage pick-up
  - Delivers to landfill in Glendive
  - 2 trucks



**Figure 12. Prairie County Courthouse.**

- Hospital
  - Up to 25 Beds
  - Emergency Room Service
  - 47 Employees
- Fire Protection
  - Volunteer staffing
  - 3 trucks, including 1 grass tender, 1 fire tender
- Ambulance
  - 2 ambulances
  - Volunteer service, pays stipend for runs



## ***Roads***

Terry's road system is the classic grid pattern found in small towns throughout the country. Once out of favor with planners, the classic grid is popular again because it can easily disperse traffic and because it provides a firm connection with traditional rural American cultural roots.

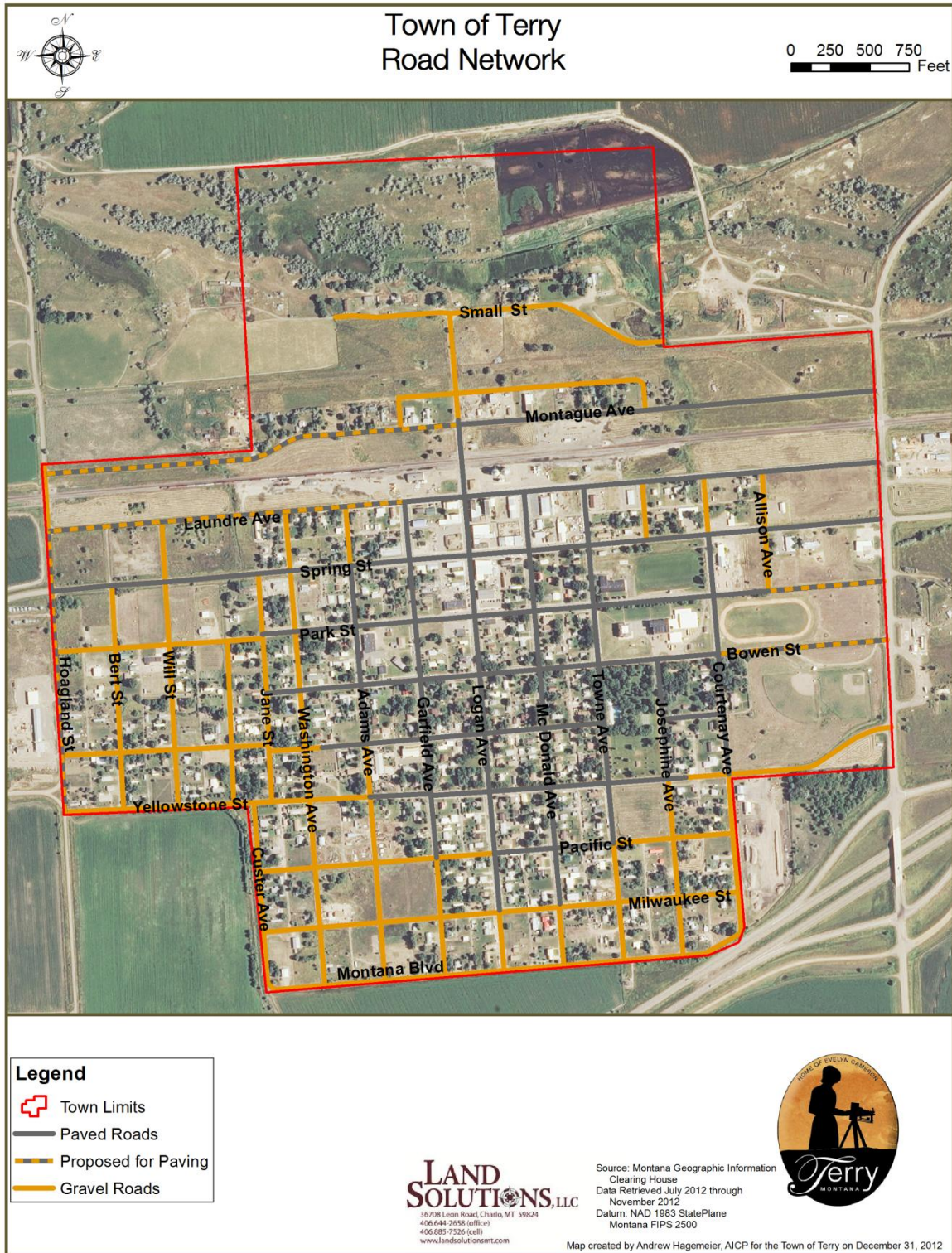
- Terry has approximately 15.5 miles of roads
- 6.77 miles of Terry's road system are paved, 8.73 are gravel
- Highway 10 and Highway 253 are maintained by the Montana Department of Transportation



**Figure 13: A truck travels down Highway 10 with Terry in its taillights.**







**Figure 14. Map: Town of Terry road network.**



## ***Sewer and Water***

The initial pipes for the majority of Terry's sewer system were set in the ground between 1917 and 1927. A major improvement, the installation of a discharge line to the stabilization ponds, occurred in 1964. The system was rehabilitated in the 1990s. The system has had some issues meeting state standards in the more immediate past. A recent cursory evaluation of the system indicates that with the construction of an additional retention/treatment cell and other improvements, Terry's sewer capacity could probably accommodate a town population of 1,200 people. The town is also facing increased regulatory requirements and should commission a preliminary engineering report to assess what improvements may be needed.

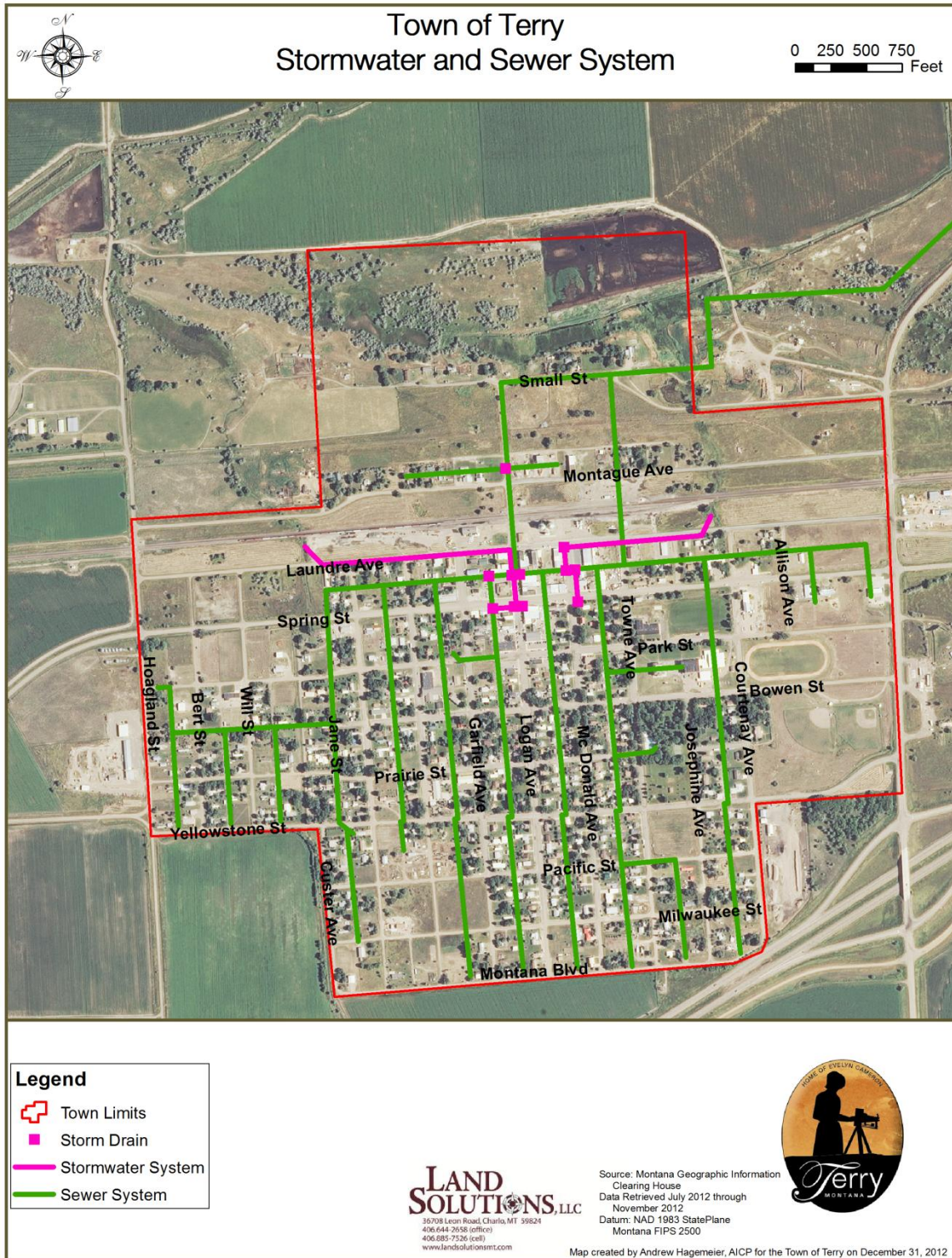
Terry does not have a publicly maintained water system. Homes and businesses in Terry are on individual, shared, or small community wells. The lack of a public water system could be detrimental to attracting some types of growth, although the local aquifers are reported to provide significant quantities of water. The cost of constructing a municipal water system would most likely be prohibitive unless very creative financing was found.



**Figure 15. One of two sewage lagoons northeast of town.**







**Figure 16. Map: Town of Terry sewer and storm drainage system.**





## Sidewalks

Sidewalks exist in much of the central business district and along many residential streets. Sidewalks are critical infrastructure for a small town, providing inviting, safe places to walk (especially for an aging population) and definition to streets. However, they are costly to install. Also, if they are not properly installed, sidewalks can prohibit effective dispersal of storm water. As a policy, the town should require sidewalks to be installed along street frontages in new development and pursue a cost sharing program in existing neighborhoods with priority funding going toward serving senior citizens, school children, and connecting to the downtown area.



Figure 17. Scenes of sidewalks around Terry.







**Figure 18. Map: Town of Terry sidewalk network.**



# Other Infrastructure

The shops and businesses of Terry are as important to the vitality of the town as the roads and sewer. Without the shops, and the people who run them, the citizens of Terry wouldn't have a place to go for coffee or a sandwich, a place to deposit their money, or a place to get some irrigation supplies or a new doorknob for the bathroom door. These services, and the jobs they provide, if not located in Terry would be exported to a larger neighboring community. One of the greatest needs cited by local residents has been a younger generation of business owners who would continue to keep Terry's shops open as the older generation retires.

In addition to the shops, restaurants and bars, Terry has a number of other amenities making this town one-of-a-kind. Most notably, Terry has a museum honoring the famous prairie life photographer Evelyn Cameron. In addition, Highway 253 has been designated a Big Sky Backcountry Byway, attracting tourists to the area. The Yellowstone River, which flows just outside of town, is the longest undammed river in the lower 48 states. The closest public boat launch is in Fallon, approximately 8 river miles (10 road miles) from Terry. Just up river from Terry is the Terry Badlands Wilderness Study Area. Managed by the Bureau of Land Management, the Terry Badlands WSA is 44,000 acres of wild country containing the Calypso Trail. It offers hiking, biking, and technical 4 x 4 trails.

## Natural Resources and Lands with Impediments to Development

### ***Sand and Gravel Resources***

The Town of Terry was settled on benches above the Yellowstone River. Many of the soils and substrates below Terry's surface were deposited over the millennia by the river and may contain sand and gravel resources. The Town of Terry requires sand and gravel resources for many uses. Within the Town Limits, most of the land area is not available for extraction because of the intensity of land use and the presence of infrastructure, such as roads and sewer lines. Within the planning area outside the Town Limits, there are fewer surface obstacles to sand and gravel extraction. Terry's sand and gravel resources are likely to come from outside the Town Limits, but perhaps from within the planning area.

### ***Sensitive Lands***

Within the planning area there are lands that because of their characteristics may not be suitable for development intensities associated with a town. These lands include wetlands, open water,





floodplains, steep slopes, and areas with shallow ground water (less than four feet to the surface). High intensity development should be avoided in these areas, some of which are mapped in figure 25.

## ***Potential for Fire and Wildland Fire***

Fire has historically had a role and presence on the prairie. People assume that a lack of timber and brush for prairie fires means there isn't a risk to life and property. This is a dangerous assumption. Prairie fires, when pushed by winds and dry fuel, travel at extremely fast rates and surprisingly high intensities. They are difficult to control and can burn huge land areas traveling enormous distances in relatively short periods of time. While much of the land surrounding Terry is irrigated crop land with a relatively low risk of fire, the Town should consider the response times for new development and work with Prairie County regarding disaster planning to keep the risk to life and property damage from fire low.



**Figure 19. A lone boater takes advantage of a gentle bank to load up for a float just north of the Highway 253 bridge outside Terry.**

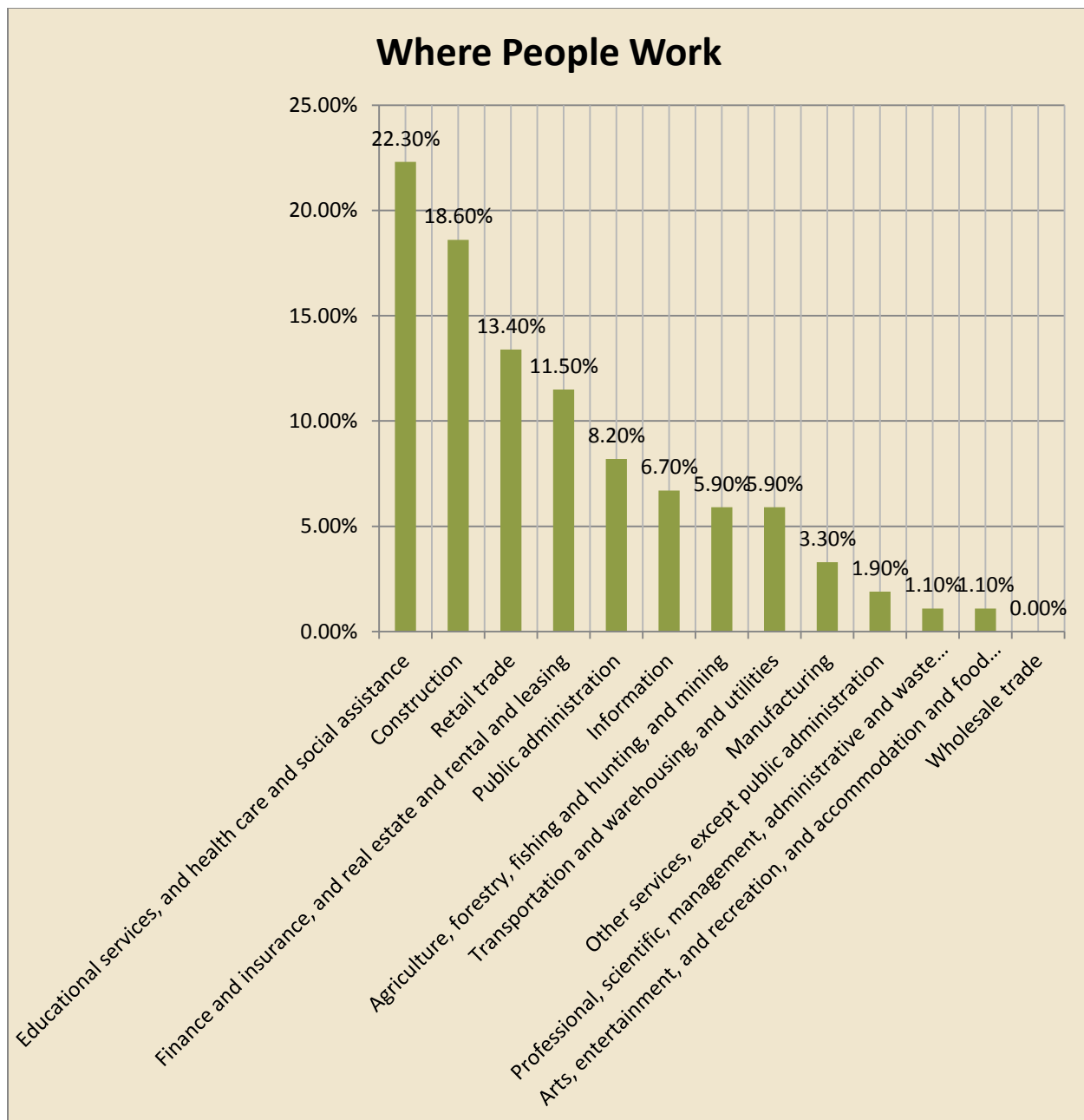


# Economic Profile

The challenges of an aging population carry over into the economic profile of the community. With an aging population, Terry has high ratios of people not in the workforce and on fixed incomes.

Like many rural communities, Terry's economy is based on agricultural and natural resources. However, Terry also enjoys a downtown that has many of the amenities that other small towns don't. Terry has a bank, hardware, clothing and grocery stores, an accountant, newspaper, gift shop, butcher, hair salon, real estate agency, a service station/convenience store, restaurants and bars, a funeral parlor, laundry, car wash, accountant, post office and churches. These services contribute to the tax base as well as provide jobs outside the agricultural and natural resource based industries. Terry's largest individual employers are the school district and the hospital.





**Figure 20. Employment by sector in the Town of Terry.**

Due to the aging population in Terry, 48% of the population is not within the workforce. This contrasts with the State of Montana where 34.7% of the population is not within the workforce. It is estimated that 56.8% of Terry's populations receives some income form Social Security. Along similar lines, residents of Prairie County receive a larger portion of their personal income from transfer payments (Social security, dividends) and property income (farms) than earned income (wages).



## Census 2010 Economic Facts and Figures

- Estimated size of Terry's workforce over the age 16: 269
- 1 out of every 2 people in Terry is not within the workforce
- Median Household income of Terry: \$34,028
- Median Household income of Montana: \$43,872
- Per capita income in Terry: \$21,301
- Per capita income of Montana: \$23,836



**Figure 21. The bean bins in the heart of town. Agriculture is an important component of Terry's economy.**





# Current Land Use

A critical part of any growth policy is the current land use map. The current land use map for the Town of Terry (figure 23 on the following page) displays existing land use patterns which are critical for making decisions about future growth. This map was created through the work of citizen volunteers and derived from State of Montana CAMA data collected by the Montana Department of Revenue.

In addition to the current land use for the Town of Terry, a current land use map for the entire planning area can be found in figure 24. The current land use map for the Terry Planning Area was created with the same methodology as the map for the Town. In addition to the types of land

uses, lands that have impediments to development have been identified. Impediments include floodplains, wetlands, and ponds. Other lands with impediments such as steep slopes could be present in isolated areas, especially north of the river.



**Figure 22: A historic building currently provides single-family housing near downtown.**

Both of these maps represent the conditions of the community and surrounding area at the time this growth policy was developed. They will change over time and can be referenced to identify changes to the community from the time of plan adoption. But most importantly, these maps will be a useful tool in developing the goals, objectives, and policies that will guide future growth.

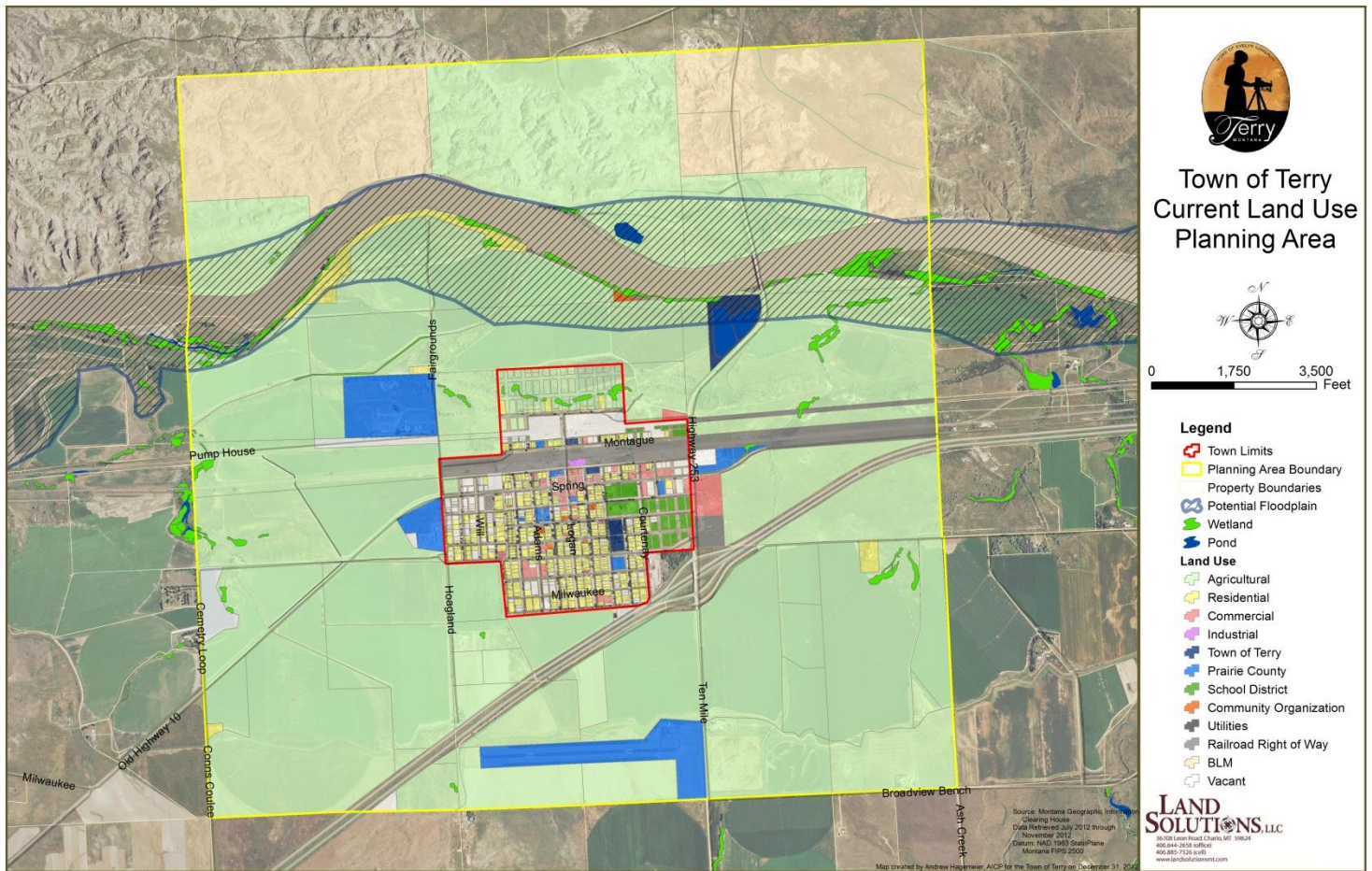




**Figure 23. Map: Current land use in Terry.**







**Figure 24. Map: Current land use and impediments to development outside of the Town Limits but within the planning area.**

## Trends and Forecasts

### *Trends*

In order to make decisions about how a community wants to grow, a growth policy must include assumptions about the types of growth the community might experience in the future. These assumptions or forecasts can be based on a number of different factors, such as previous growth rates or predicted economic conditions. With assumptions about growth, a community can make decisions about where the growth should occur, what types of infrastructure are needed, and what actions might encourage new growth.



Terry's situation at the time of drafting this growth policy is a challenging atmosphere for predicting the amount and types of growth that will occur. Looking at past growth rates and the current age of the town's citizens, the natural assumption would be the Town of Terry is going to continue to shrink. But at the end of 2012 as this document is drafted, there is an oil boom centered 2-3 hours east of Terry, and exploration is occurring in the hills not too far away. Will this oil boom hit the area? Will Terry experience rapid growth like towns in the bull's eye of the oil fields? No one is really sure.

Many scenarios could play out, but three simplified growth scenarios represent the range of possibilities. These scenarios could be called "The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly."

1. **The Good:** The oil boom doesn't hit Terry but stays farther to the east and only moderately impacts the area. Commodity prices on agricultural goods remain strong. Terry's shops, stores and farms benefit, but Terry does not go into a boom. Terry experiences some growth driven by families whose bread winners work in the oil fields but want their family to live in a small quiet town outside the boom. Terry continues to attract retirees and older residents who grew up in the area and want to move home. Investment in homes and local businesses occurs at a moderate but healthy pace.
2. **The Bad:** The oil boom does not hit Terry, staying too far away for Terry to be affected, or it ends entirely. Agricultural prices are not strong enough to attract new residents. Terry's population continues to age, and new families do not move in. Terry's population and housing stock continues its decline.
3. **The Ugly:** The oil boom hits Terry in a big way. Terry experiences sudden and rapid growth. The town does not have the infrastructure to accommodate sudden, rapid growth and the change is haphazard and the town's historic, small town character is not maintained. The town struggles to accommodate the growth, and it takes years of catch-up to bring the infrastructure up to appropriate levels.

Based on the above scenarios, research and interviews in and around the community, this growth policy is written with the following assumptions in mind: It doesn't appear Terry will be in the "boom zone" of the oil fields. The general expectation is the boom is likely to stay to the east or skirt around Terry. The town will see some benefits of energy development and transport, which will increase tax and business revenues and attract some residents. Economists predict commodity prices will stay relatively strong. Therefore the "Ugly" scenario seems the least likely. It is also the scenario that the Town of Terry has no ability to influence; either the oil is there or it isn't, and local policy can't influence that.





## **Forecasts**

So what is more likely, the “good” or the “bad”? The trends discussed above are just assumptions, based on observations and not necessarily any firm analysis. Planners use a tool called a Cohort-Survival Population Forecast. This analysis essentially uses US Census Bureau survival rates and birth rates for given age groups to forecast a population ten years from now. It uses the age structure of a town to determine what the population will be in ten years. This analysis does not include migration (people moving in and out of town).

Based on a Cohort-Survival Population Forecast for Terry, with no migration, the population of the town is forecasted to be 504 people in 2020, at the time of the next census. That is a decline of 17%. In order to offset the decline, Terry will have to experience a net in-migration of 10 people per year, or about a 1.6% in-migration rate.

The Eastern Plains Economic Development Corporation, the entity charged with helping the private sector to grow the region’s economy, believes some growth will occur in Terry because of the energy potential in the region and solid commodity prices. But this is no guarantee, and what happens outside of Terry’s boundaries is largely out of the town’s control. Terry faces a serious challenge to its long-term vitality. There just aren’t enough young people around.

Unfortunately, it appears the “bad” is a very real scenario. Based on the Cohort-Survival Population Forecast, if Terry does not take action to encourage in-migration the population may decline by 17% over the course of the next ten years. Whether or not there is a net in-migration due to the oil boom to the east can’t be measured or forecasted, it is just a hunch.

Fortunately, there is good news. A net in-migration rate of 1.6% is attainable. However, it is clear if the Town of Terry is to avoid continued decline, it must take action to capitalize on the opportunities occurring to the east. Terry is blessed with unique characteristics and charm that with hard work and some luck can make the community stand out above the rest and encourage a bright future. The following chapters lay out a plan for getting there.



# Chapter Four: Issues and Opportunities



# Introduction

This chapter has two roles:

1. To identify the community's strengths and weaknesses in order to capitalize on its strengths and improve its weaknesses.
2. To communicate to future users of the growth policy the challenges and possibilities the authors of this plan identified as being important so they can measure this plan's effectiveness. Tomorrow's planners will be able to see topics the Town of Terry was addressing and ask, "Did the strategies in the plan address the issue, or at least move things in the right direction?" and "Did the town capitalize on those opportunities?"

## *Population*

**Issue:** There is one issue facing the Town of Terry that stands out as the most important to the future of the community: the declining population. The Town of Terry's population has declined to roughly 605 residents from its peak population of 1,191 in 1950. In recent years, population decline has stabilized, but the age of the population indicates the decline will continue. People are a town's greatest and most critical resource. Without people, there is no town. Terry must find a way to stabilize the declining population by attracting new residents to the community.

**Opportunity:** Terry has many unique traits for a small community within the region. The small town atmosphere and friendliness of neighbors, the level of local services, a wonderful school and park, a quaint downtown, a local hospital, reasonable land and home prices, and the neighboring natural amenities are contributing to some in-migration of retirees. The town has an opportunity to capitalize on its small town feel and market itself to retirees.

**Opportunity:** Recently, strong commodity prices and the nearby oil and gas fields have boosted the region's economy. Terry may be able further develop and market its unique character, attracting families whose bread winners work in the oil and gas fields to the northeast but are looking for a true small town atmosphere to raise their children. In addition, Terry's small town charm and friendly atmosphere may attract residents from nearby larger towns looking for a different pace of life.

**Opportunity:** The sense in the community is that many older residents would like to age in place and not move to a nursing home when they can no longer care for all of their daily needs but are still mostly independent. A group of smaller, ranch-style homes with maintenance, some meals, periodic trips to Miles City or other attractions could be well utilized in Terry.



**Opportunity:** Terry has a small community run hospital providing emergency room service and health care to the elderly population including accommodations for long-term care. This type of facility is a unique asset for a community of this size and contributes to the health and safety of the all residents in Terry and the surrounding areas. The community hospital's facilities for long-term care are typically at capacity and not able to meet demand. Additional long-term care in Terry is needed.

**Opportunity:** Due to its aging population, Terry could make use of hospice care, with residential, medical, and other services available to patients and their families.

## ***Housing***

**Issue:** Although pride of ownership is evident in Terry, the overall condition of the current housing stock is deteriorating. The cost of buying a well maintained home is less than it costs to buy a deteriorating home and renovate it. The stock of houses in poor condition is probably not going to shrink without significant changes in housing prices, which do seem to be going up. Cost increases would have impacts on the livability of the community, particularly for those residents on fixed incomes. Homeownership for seasonal use, such as fall hunting, also limits the availability of housing for permanent residents, impacts housing prices and does not generally improve the quality of the community's housing stock.

**Opportunity:** While resources are generally not available to help homeowners repair and maintain homes, linking housing and community development is an effective strategy at preventing further decline in the housing stock. Although budgets are always tight, investments in community facilities and public spaces – tree-lined streets, upgrading street lights, parks and sidewalks – go a long way in maintaining and improving property values.

**Issue:** The Town of Terry lacks various types of available housing, including multi-family and transitional housing for the increasing elderly population.

**Issue:** The Town also lacks appropriately priced housing for its workforce.

**Opportunity:** The extent of platted lots within the current grid system and the existing infrastructure both provide opportunities for a significant increase in new housing, allowing the community to accommodate new growth without having to expend major sums to maintain basic infrastructure.





## ***Economy***

**Issue:** Jobs are hard to find in Terry. The largest employers are the school district and the hospital. Many of the well-established businesses lack successors to maintain operations into the future.

**Issue:** The Town of Terry has limited resources including money and staffing to develop and promote community and economic development programs. Sources of state and federal assistance to develop programs may fluctuate or dwindle in the future.

**Opportunity:** Terry has strong historic resources and should continue to capitalize on them.

**Opportunity:** Terry has a base of active, community-minded people who regularly coordinate and participate in community efforts.

**Opportunity:** Terry and surrounding partners can think and act regionally. Opportunities to share resources and create economic development strategies and programs with talented people from other communities exist, especially with EPEDC functioning as a regional economic development resource. These opportunities include identifying natural resource, economic, and cultural assets that will allow Terry to stand out as a unique community in a unique region. Combining efforts to develop regional programs and events, as well as applying for coordinated grants will benefit the entire area.

**Issue/Opportunity:** There is little direct connection between the town and the Yellowstone River. Developing a boat launch could help spawn additional tourism (guide services for fishing, hunting and historic tourists, overnight guests) and provide a great amenity to attract outdoor-oriented families.

**Issue:** The Town of Terry's sewer system is in need of upgrades.

**Issue:** The town does not have a municipal water system that could support larger scale commercial and industrial development.

**Issue:** The lack of zoning leaves little certainty about what will be developed on neighboring properties. On the one hand, this freedom is great for the individual who owns property. On the other hand, this lack of certainty could be a drawback to those willing to invest in a significant development project. However, zoning requires enforcement and that requires political will and funding.

**Issue/Opportunity:** There are a number of stagnant properties within the planning area, along with several underdeveloped properties.



**Opportunity:** Advances in technology allow small towns with the right infrastructure (e.g., internet bandwidth) to compete with larger communities for residents who can bring jobs with them.

## ***Agriculture***

**Issue:** Although Terry is located in an agricultural area, the agricultural labor force is declining, consequently losing influence in a changing demographic environment.

**Opportunity:** Agriculture is an economic staple for the community and greatly influences the Town of Terry's atmosphere, as well as contributing to the community's overall stability. There may be new cultural opportunities to celebrate and pass on the traditions of a farming and ranching community or new economic opportunities to develop new products or industries.

## ***Character***

**Opportunity:** Even though Terry lies along a major transportation corridor, the community's identity has changed very little in the past 50 years. This has contributed to the history and character that are attractive attributes of the community. These attributes are rare and worth protecting.

**Opportunity:** Terry has a unique character. Towns with unique character can leverage that into economic development strategies that attract jobs and diversify the economy. Below is a list generated by the Planning Board of places and activities in and around Terry that have special meaning to them:

- Scenic view of the badlands from town
- Town park and pool
- Museum
- Public school facilities and grounds
- Prairie community churches
- Calypso Trail
- Old Milwaukie Bridge
- Powder River
- Fairgrounds
- Yellowstone River
- Kempton Hotel
- Badlands
- Agate hunting along rivers and creeks



# Chapter Five: Goals, Objectives, and Policies



# Introduction

The goals, objectives and policies contained within a growth policy establish the path the community plans to take in order to fulfill its vision. Terry's Growth Policy is, among other things, a strategy to grow the community. The goals, objectives, and policies contained in this chapter are designed to represent collaborative efforts that support current residents and attract new ones.

Terry's strategy is based on four pillars. The four pillars serve as the organization of the goals, objectives, and policies. They are:

- Infrastructure: What makes the town function
  - Transportation (roads, sidewalks, trails, and shared transit)
  - Health Care (Prairie Community Hospital, assisted living, ambulance services)
  - Sewer
  - Water
  - Safety (fire and police)
  - Housing (amount, type, location, and condition)
- Town Character: What makes the town attractive
  - Downtown appearance (lighting, facades, history, décor)
  - Small town atmosphere (agricultural base, walkable, friendly)
  - Impressions (entrances, design, town layout)
  - Neighborhoods (history, street trees, types of use)
  - Land use
- Town Amenities: What makes the town unique
  - Parks
  - Trails
  - Yellowstone River
  - Badlands
  - Evelyn Cameron
  - Arts and entertainment
- The People: What builds community
  - Community organizations





- Special events
- History
- Education

## ***Infrastructure***

**Goal 1. Ensure the provision of high-quality public services by planning for the long-term development, upgrades, maintenance, and operation of public facilities over time.**

Objective 1.1. Prepare a capital improvements plan prioritizing expenditures that encourage new growth and attract new residents.

Policy: Upgrades to Terry's sewer system should be given the highest priority in capital improvements planning. The community should work with the State of Montana Community Technical Assistance Program and other organizations to identify funding necessary to upgrade the sewer system.

Policy: Infrastructure that attracts young families such as park, public safety, and school projects should be given a high priority for maintenance and improvement.

Policy: Support capital improvement projects that develop town character and community amenities such as street trees, sidewalks, and downtown enhancements.

Policy: Support efforts and pursue grant funding to investigate the feasibility and possible development of a public water system.

Policy: Provide opportunities for growth, while ensuring the cost of delivering services is efficient to the community. I.e., the costs of extending services (such as sewer) to new development should be paid for by the development.

**Goal 2. Advance the health, safety, security, and well-being of Terry residents.**

Objective 2.1. Maximize opportunities for collaboration among federal, state, and local-level partners related to emergency service capabilities.

Policy: Pursue and support the development of an exit off of I-94 at Conns Coulee Road to encourage economic development and efficient access to the west end of town.



Policy: Continue coordination with Prairie County to provide law enforcement to the Town of Terry.

Policy: Support Prairie County's efforts to maintain and improve the capabilities of the Sheriff's department.

Policy: Maintain cooperation between Prairie County and the Terry Rural Fire Department to provide firefighting service to the Town of Terry.

Policy: Support emergency room services at the Prairie Community Hospital.

Policy: Support emergency ambulance services.

Policy: Support efforts aimed at providing all types of senior housing and hospice care.

**Goal 3. Help the hospital remain an important resource for the overall health and safety of the community, in addition to a tool that can be used to attract new residents.**

Objective 3.1. Help the Prairie Community Hospital remain strong, operating at or above current capabilities.

Policy: Provide the hospital with the infrastructure and surrounding land uses necessary to maintain and expand facilities.

Policy: Support the hospital's efforts to maintain existing programs and develop additional capacity.

**Goal 4. Share resources and skills with other communities and agencies within the region to promote infrastructure development and overall economic development.**

Objective 4.1. Share resources and economic development strategies and programs with talented people from other local communities to benefit Terry and the region.

Policy: Support the work of the Eastern Plains Economic Development Corporation and partners as identified in the current Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. Support collaborative efforts and coordination with other government entities, non-profits, community organizations, and private parties focused on economic development.



Policy: Identify natural, economic, and cultural assets that will allow Terry to stand out as a unique community in a unique region, and combine efforts to apply for grants that will benefit the region.

Policy: Promote Terry and the region as a great place to raise a family and retire. Consider actively promoting Terry in Sidney, Williston, Dickinson, Watford City, and other places.

**Goal 5. Strive to be a community with strong, healthy neighborhoods anchored by a stable or improving housing stock while assisting the private sector with providing affordable housing for its citizens**

Objective 5.1. Identify areas that are desirable for residential growth and target capital improvements in these areas.

Policy: Promote development of existing lots and historical housing densities to maximize use of existing infrastructure.

Policy: Support the development of single-family and multi-family housing.

Policy: Support compatible residential and commercial development (i.e. apartments above stores).

Policy: Support the creation of senior housing.

Objective 5.2. Create a citizen committee with a mission to improve Terry's housing stock. This committee should research opportunities, propose actions, and make recommendations to the Town Council and Mayor.

Policy: Pursue assistance via grant programs to rehabilitate existing housing units.

Policy: Identify and initiate programs to address decay and assist with demolition.

Policy: Promote opportunities or incentives for property owners to sell or rent vacant lots or houses.

Objective 5.3. Improve capabilities of fixed income persons to maintain their homes and locate affordable housing.

Policy: Support volunteer efforts to help the elderly and disabled maintain homes and yards.



Policy: Support development that meets the housing needs of seniors and those with disabilities.

Policy: Encourage new development to include affordable housing options.

Policy: Promote development that does not displace current citizenry.

## ***Town Character***

**Goal 1. Develop Terry as a town regionally recognized for having unique characteristics and charm that attracts young families and retirees for its small town atmosphere. Sustain and support existing main street businesses, while accepting and encouraging new business to the community.**

Objective 1.1. Provide for desirable growth consistent with Terry's small town charm and unique character.

Policy: Pursue strategies that will provide for predictability in land use and preserve community character.

Policy: New growth should mimic traditional American small town patterns and include historic architectural styles.

Objective 1.2. Continue participation in the Main Street Program focusing on four points: organization, promotion, design, and economic restructuring.

Policy: Encourage a non-profit downtown association or business association whose focus is providing organization and leadership in long-term planning efforts. The Chamber of Commerce or a subcommittee could play this role.

Policy: Promote the downtown core as a special place to shop, live, and work.

Policy: Continually improve the design quality of the downtown, prioritizing the renovation of historic buildings and commercial facades, improving signs, window displays, lighting, and streetscapes.

Policy: Create a low-interest loan pool for façade, sign and other small scale improvements, and for downtown business promotion and retention.





Objective 1.3. Strike a balance between commercial development that takes advantage of the highway and interstate while not taking focus away from the downtown commercial core.

Policy: Highway commercial development should be incorporated into the existing community in order to draw people into Terry, and not just on and off the interstate.

**Goal 2. Allow agriculture to continue playing a key role in Terry’s economic base and cultural identity.**

Objective 2.1. Attract agricultural uses and agricultural based businesses to the community.

Policy: Terry should designate areas that can accommodate agricultural-industrial businesses, taking advantage of access to the interstate and railroad, while not interfering with surrounding residential areas.

Policy: Focus growth near the existing town core to minimize impacts to adjacent farmland.

Policy: Support public and private efforts to develop agricultural products and markets.

Policy: Support community events and activities that promote western culture and the town’s agricultural and pioneer history.

**Goal 3. In the tradition of American small towns, Terry will continue to be safe for children, the elderly, and for any resident to walk or bike throughout the community.**

Objective 3.1. Fill in gaps within the existing sidewalk network in/near the urban core.

Policy: Develop a voluntary cost share program with property owners to help fund the construction of new sidewalks.

Policy: Support opportunities for funding such as grants for developing safe routes to schools and parks.

Objective 3.2. Develop mechanisms that promote “walkability” in new growth.

Policy: New development should incorporate sidewalks that also address storm water management.



Objective 3.3. Develop a connection with the Montana Department of Transportation to communicate the priorities of the community in the design stages of any MDOT projects

Policy: The Town of Terry encourages MDOT to incorporate context sensitive design (i.e., making roadway projects blend into the community instead of taking over the community).

**Goal 4. The small town charm and unique character of Terry will provide good first and lasting impressions for visitors, attracting tourists and new residents to the community.**

Objective 4.1. Develop and implement a historic preservation approach in concert with 2012 Terry Heritage Tourism Action Plan.

Policy: Preservation planning should be considered in development proposals.

Objective 4.2. Build on efforts to create welcoming “entrances” into the community on the east and west ends of town.

Policy: Work with civic groups to enhance entrance features.

Policy: Discourage development that will make Terry look like “Anytown, USA” at entrance areas. Encourage development at the entrance areas with historic architectural features that blend into and enhance the community.

**Goal 5. The neighborhoods of Terry will have distinct character, be well maintained, and be inviting places to live.**

Objective 5.1. Continue programs that maintain Terry’s neighborhoods, and identify and develop new ones as feasible.

Policy: Continue support for solid waste pick-up in order to keep Terry clean.

Policy: Initiate and participate in community clean-up days once or twice per year.

Policy: Initiate and participate in community efforts to plant and maintain street trees.

Policy: Investigate funding opportunities to update and replace street lighting.



Policy: Support improvements to infrastructure such as streets, sidewalks, sewer, and water system as funds and maintenance capabilities allow.

Objective 5.2. Develop historic districts.

Policy: Investigate public support for the designation of historic districts.

Policy: Create one or more historic districts if interest is sufficient.

Objective 5.3. Develop mechanisms that prevent the degradation of Terry's neighborhoods from the introduction of incompatible land uses.

Policy: Identify areas for land uses that will support Terry's economy, yet provide for the separation of uses which could be incompatible because of public health, safety, and/or the general welfare.

## ***Town Amenities***

**Goal 1. Terry will continue to be a community with exceptional natural and cultural amenities, contributing to a quality of life that attracts families and retirees as well as generates tourism.**

Objective 1.1. Maintain and improve existing parks in Terry.

Policy: The city park and pool should be given a high priority in capital improvements planning and funding.

Objective 1.2. Develop recreational opportunities in the badlands and surrounding countryside that provide activities for current residents, attract potential residents, and draw visitors from outside the area.

Policy: Partner with MTFWP, the BLM, and Prairie County to develop a public river access and boat launch on the Yellowstone River adjacent to Highway 253.

Policy: Support the Prairie County Economic Development Council's efforts regarding the Calypso Trail and other recreational opportunities.

Policy: Support local recreation associations and clubs that work to improve the conditions of and access to natural and cultural amenities in and around Terry.



Policy: Protect and promote cultural attractions such as the Old Milwaukie Bridge and scenic views of the badlands from town as features unique to Terry.

Objective 1.3. Improve public facilities that add value to activities and public gathering spaces in Terry.

Policy: Support the maintenance of parks.

Policy: Identify an underutilized property in the downtown area that is high profile and could be used as a public gathering space for community events, farmers markets, temporary uses, and other public activities. Investigate the feasibility of creating such a space.

## ***The People***

**Goal 1. Encourage leadership and community spirit through strong community organizations, a friendly atmosphere, local events, and colorful history.**

Objective 1.1. Maintain and improve community character and implement beautification projects.

Policy: Support the efforts of community organizations to maintain or improve unique and/or historic events, buildings, as well as public and private spaces that benefit the entire community.

Policy: Encourage youth volunteerism in a variety of activities within the Terry Public School system and various local clubs.

Policy: Support the school district in its efforts to maintain, improve, and develop its facilities and encourage these facilities to be open to the public as scheduling allows.

Objective 1.2. Expand opportunities for life-long learning for adults and children beyond, or outside, the K-12 system.

Policy: Support the Prairie County Library, Prairie County Museum, Evelyn Cameron Heritage, Inc., MSU Extension Service, and all other such organizations offering educational opportunities.

Objective 1.3. Prioritize, promote, and protect historic and cultural resources





Policy: Continue efforts to implement the 2012 Terry Heritage Tourism Action Plan.

Policy: Maintain Terry's designation as the Home of the Evelyn Cameron Gallery and a Preserve America Community.

**Goal 2. Protect the rights of property owners to enjoy and benefit from their investment**

Objective 2.1. Develop mechanisms that guarantee landowners and all residents of Terry the rights of due process and equal treatment.

Policy: Preserve the right of existing land uses to maintain their presence and expand as appropriate.

Policy: Allow exceptions from regulations in situations where a hardship is present: 1) when in accordance with standards that are equally applied, and 2) do not contradict the intent of the regulation and 3) are in accordance with state law.

Policy: Provide the public with opportunities to participate in land use decisions.

Policy: Make decisions that impact property owners in an open and public setting.



# Chapter Six: Future Land Use Map



# Future Land Use Designations

The future land use map is one the most important maps in the growth policy because it guides future growth. When property is annexed into town, the future land uses must generally comply with the future land use map designations. If zoning is implemented or amended, the boundaries of the zoning districts must be generally consistent with this map. From time to time, this map will need to be updated and amended. The amendment procedure is found at the end of Chapter 7.

The future land use map shows five designations: Agriculture, Residential, Central Business, Highway Commercial, and General Industrial. The following is a brief explanation of what these designations envision.

**Agriculture:** A wide-ranging area encouraging general commercial and non-commercial farming, the raising of livestock and fowl, as well as agricultural sales, stables, nurseries, bee keeping, kennels and animal shelters, in addition to all types of housing, public, religious and educational land uses, railroad uses and electrical substations, and gas regulator stations.

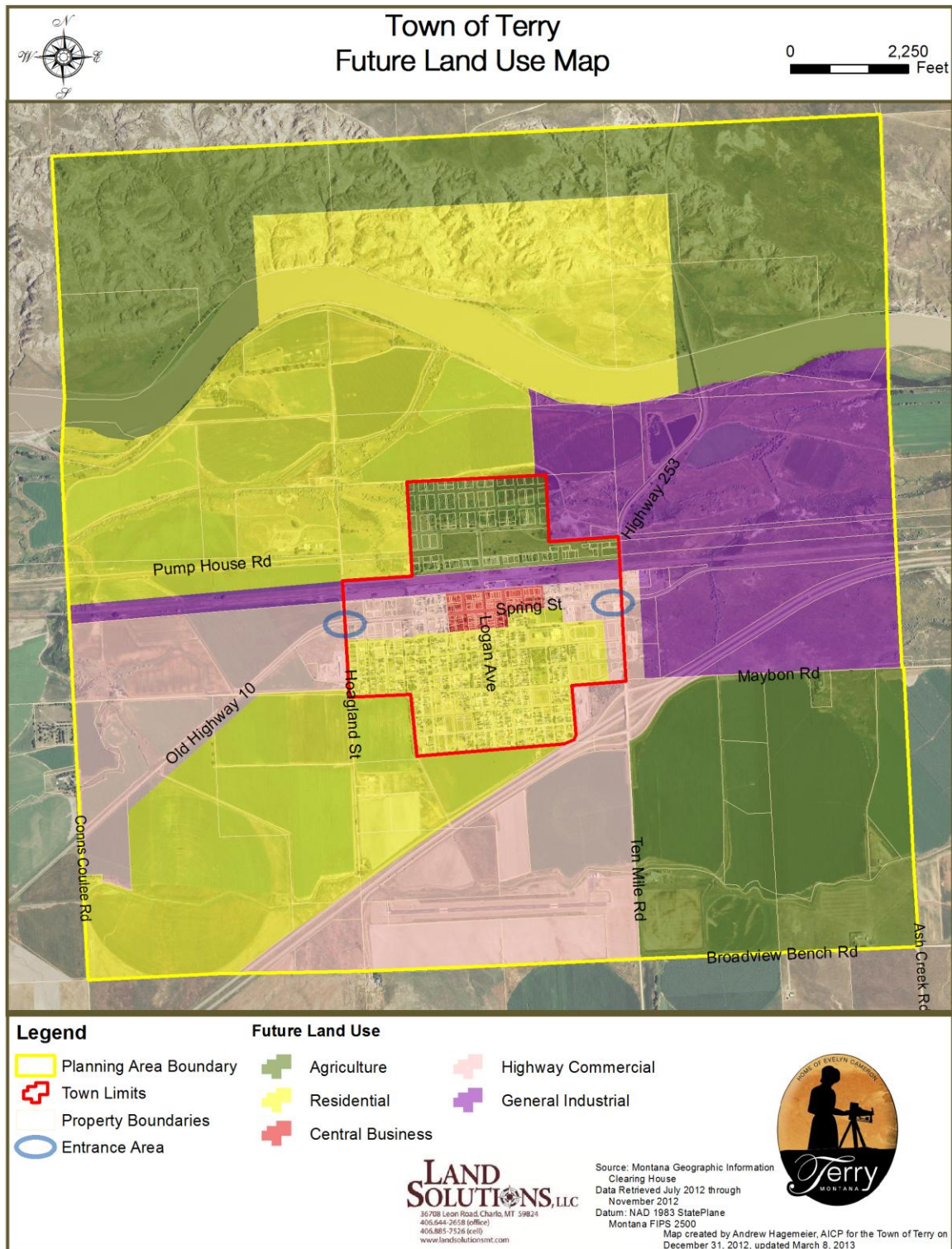
**Residential:** All types of housing, schools, health care, parks, and public land uses.

**Central Business District:** An area for the town's businesses, government, service, and cultural activities. Commercial land uses such as hotels, offices, museums, galleries, restaurants and bars, and also apartments above commercial uses, are encouraged.

**Highway Commercial:** A wide-ranging business and light industrial area along transportation corridors for land uses requiring more space than in the central business district but having fewer impacts than general industrial.

**General Industrial:** An area set aside for heavy commercial, manufacturing, processing and other industrial uses that will produce smoke, dirt, odors and other impacts, require access to transportation facilities and extensive, open storage space.





**Figure 25. Map: Future Land Use Map.**





# Chapter Seven: Implementation Strategy



# Introduction

The Growth Policy's vision, goals, objectives, and policies are nothing but words if action is not taken. The actions are implementation measures or "tools." Implementation tools can be regulatory, non-regulatory, or a combination of both. The actions, and the timeline discussed below, are purposefully general. This is done to allow the town's elected officials, staff, and appointed boards the opportunity to craft specific courses of action based upon specific situations. The Town of Terry can carry out the implementation of the growth policy with the following actions:

- Regulatory Actions
  - The Town of Terry develops and revises regulations in the municipal code to ensure consistency with the policies in this document. Examples could be zoning regulations, subdivision regulations, and/or community decay ordinances among others.
- Policy Decisions
  - Elected officials, town staff and officially appointed boards make day-to-day decisions related to land use that should be based upon the guidance in this plan. Examples could be writing letters of support for grant funding or making decisions on sidewalk upgrades.
- Detailed or General Planning Efforts
  - The growth policy establishes some additional planning efforts to be completed at a later date. Examples could be creating a capital improvements plan or a planning effort to develop a new park.
- Intergovernmental Cooperation
  - The Town will work and cooperate with other governmental organizations. Examples of these actions include the use of Memoranda of Understanding and Inter-local Agreements.
- Funding Mechanisms
  - The Town of Terry may occasionally have to develop methods to fund programs or actions. Funding can come from many sources including, but not limited to,



grants, special assessments and user fees. General funds can also be used in specific situations. Funding special projects should be based on long-range planning and policy decisions.

The timing of implementation actions are organized in the following manner:

- Immediate: Generally within 1 to 2 years of adoption of the plan
- Mid-Term: Generally within 3 to 5 years of adoption of the plan
- Long-Term: Generally 5 years or longer after adoption of the plan
- On-Going: Occurring continually



# Implementation Plan

**Infrastructure Objective 1.1: Prepare a capital improvements plan prioritizing expenditures that encourage new growth and attract new residents.**

Policy	Action	Timing
Upgrades to Terry's sewer system should be given the highest priority in capital improvements planning. The community should work with the State of Montana Community Technical Assistance Program and other organizations to identify funding necessary to upgrade the sewer system.	Detailed Planning Effort  Policy Decision  Funding Mechanisms	Immediate
Infrastructure that attracts young families such as parks, public safety, and schools should be given a high priority for maintenance and improvement.	Detailed Planning Effort  Policy Decision	On-Going
Support capital improvement projects that develop town character and community amenities such as street trees, sidewalks, and downtown enhancements.	Detailed Planning Effort  Policy Decision	On-Going
Support efforts and pursue grant funding to investigate the feasibility and possible development of a public water system.	Detailed Planning Effort  Policy Decision	Mid-Term
Provide opportunities for growth, while ensuring the cost of delivering services is efficient to the community. I.e., the costs of extending services (such as sewer) to new development should be paid for by the development.	General Planning Effort  Policy Decision	On-Going

**Infrastructure Objective 2.1: Maximize opportunities for collaboration among federal, state, and local-level partners related to emergency service capabilities.**

Policy	Action	Timing
Pursue and support the development of an exit off of I-94 at Conns Coulee Rd.	Intergovernmental Cooperation	Immediate, On-Going



Continue coordination with Prairie County to provide law enforcement to the Town of Terry.	Intergovernmental Cooperation	On-Going
Support Prairie County's efforts to maintain and improve the capabilities of the Sheriff's department.	Policy Decision Funding Mechanism	On-Going
Continue coordination with Prairie County to provide firefighting service to the Town of Terry.	Intergovernmental Cooperation	On-Going
Maintain cooperation between Prairie County and the Terry Rural Fire Department to provide firefighting service to the Town of Terry.	Policy Decision Funding Mechanism	On-Going
Support emergency room service at Prairie Community Hospital .	Policy Decision Funding Mechanism	On-Going
Support emergency ambulance services	Policy Decision Funding Mechanism	On-Going
Support efforts aimed at providing all types of senior housing and hospice care.	Policy Decision	On-Going
<b>Infrastructure Objective 3.1: Help the Prairie Community Hospital remain strong, operating at or above current capabilities.</b>		
<b>Policy</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timing</b>
Provide the hospital with the infrastructure and surrounding land uses necessary to maintain and expand facilities.	Detailed Planning Effort Regulatory Action	On-Going
Support the Hospital's efforts to maintain existing programs and develop additional capacity	Policy Decision Funding Mechanis	On-Going





**Infrastructure Objective 4.1: Share resources and economic development strategies and programs with talented people from other local communities to benefit Terry and the region.**

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timing</b>
Support the work of the Eastern Plains Economic Development Corporation and partners as identified in the current CEDS. Support collaborative efforts and coordination with other government entities, non-profits, community organizations, and private parties focused on economic development.	Policy Decision  Funding Mechanism  Intergovernmental Cooperation	On-Going
Identify natural, economic, and cultural assets that will allow Terry to stand out as a unique community in a unique region, and combine efforts to apply for grants that will benefit the region.	Policy Decision  Funding Mechanism	Mid-Term
Promote Terry and the region as a great place to raise a family and retire. Consider actively promoting Terry in Sidney, Williston, Dickinson, Watford City, and other places.	Policy Decision  Funding Mechanism	Immediate  On-Going

**Infrastructure Objective 5.1: Identify areas that are desirable for residential growth and target capital improvements in these areas.**

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timing</b>
Promote development on existing lots and historical housing densities to maximize use of existing infrastructure.	Regulatory Action	Immediate
Support the development of single-family and multi-family housing.	Regulatory Action	Immediate
Support the creation of senior housing	Policy Decision	On-Going
Support compatible residential and commercial development (i.e., apartments above stores)	Regulatory Action	Immediate



**Infrastructure Objective 5.2: Create a citizen committee with a mission to improve Terry's housing stock. This committee should research opportunities, propose actions, and make recommendations to the Town Council and Mayor.**

Policy	Action	Timing
Pursue assistance via grant programs to rehabilitate existing housing units	Funding Mechanism	Immediate
Identify and initiate programs to address decay and assist with demolition.	Funding Mechanism	Immediate
Promote opportunities or incentives for property owners to sell or rent vacant lots or houses	Policy Decision	On-Going

**Infrastructure Objective 5.3: Improve capabilities of fixed income persons to maintain their homes and locate affordable housing.**

Policy	Action	Timing
Support volunteer efforts to help the elderly and disabled maintain homes and yards.	Policy Decision	On-Going
Support development that meets the housing needs of seniors and those with disabilities.	Policy Decision	On-Going
Encourage new development to include affordable housing options.	Regulatory Action	Long-Term
Promote development that does not displace current citizenry.	Policy Decision	On-Going

**Town Character Objective 1.1: Provide for desirable for growth consistent with Terry's small town charm and unique character.**

Policy	Action	Timing
Pursue strategies that will provide for predictability in land use and preserve community character.	Regulatory Action	Immediate



New growth should mimic traditional American small town pattern and include historic architectural features.	Policy Decision	On-Going
<b>Town Character Objective 1.2: Continue participation in the Main Street Program focusing on four points: organization, promotion, design, and economic restructuring.</b>		
<b>Policy</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timing</b>
Encourage a non-profit downtown association or business association whose focus is providing organization and leadership in long-term planning efforts. The Chamber of Commerce (or a subcommittee) could play this role.	Detailed Planning Effort	Mid-Term
Promote the downtown core as a special place to shop, live, and work.	Policy Decision	On-Going
Continually improve the design quality of the downtown, prioritizing the renovation of historic buildings and commercial facades, improving signs, window displays, lighting, and streetscapes.	Policy Decision	On-Going
Create a low-interest loan pool for façade sign, and other small scale improvements, and for downtown business promotion and retention.	Funding Mechanism	Mid-Term
<b>Town Character Objective 1.3: Strike a balance between commercial development that takes advantage of the highway and interstate while not taking focus away from the downtown commercial core.</b>		
<b>Policy</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timing</b>
Highway commercial development should be incorporated into the existing community in order to draw people into Terry, not just on and off the interstate.	Regulatory Action	Immediate



**Town Character Objective 2.1: Attract agricultural uses and agricultural based businesses to the community.**

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timing</b>
Designate areas that can accommodate agricultural-industrial businesses, taking advantage of access to the interstate and railroad, while not interfering with surrounding residential areas.	Regulatory Action	Immediate
Focus growth near the existing town core to minimize impacts to adjacent farmland.	Regulatory Action	Immediate
Support public and private efforts to develop agricultural products and markets.	Policy Decision	On-Going
Support community events and activities that promote western culture and the town's agricultural and pioneer history.	Policy Decision Funding Mechanism	On-Going

**Town Character Objective 3.1: Fill in gaps within the existing sidewalk network in/near the urban core.**

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timing</b>
Develop a voluntary cost share program with property owners to help fund the construction of new sidewalks.	Funding Mechanism	Mid-Term
Support opportunities for funding such as grants for developing safe routes to schools and parks.	Funding Mechanism	On-Going

**Town Character Objective 3.2: Develop mechanisms that promote "walkability" in new growth.**

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timing</b>
New development should include sidewalks	Regulatory Action	Immediate



**Town Character Objective 3.3: Develop a connection with the Montana Department of Transportation to communicate the priorities of the community in the design stages of any MDOT projects.**

Policy	Action	Timing
The Town of Terry encourages MDOT to incorporate context sensitive design into any roadway projects within the planning area.	Intergovernmental Cooperation	On-Going

**Town Character Objective 4.1: Develop and implement a historic preservation approach in concert with 2012 Terry Heritage Tourism Action Plan.**

Policy	Action	Timing
Preservation planning should be considered in future growth planning and development review.	Detailed Planning Effort	Mid-Term
	Regulatory Action	On-Going

**Town Character Objective 4.2: Build on efforts to create welcoming entrances into the community on the east and west ends of town.**

Policy	Action	Timing
Work with civic groups to enhance entrance locations.	Policy Decision	On-Going
Discourage development that will make Terry look like “Anytown, USA” at entrance areas. Encourage development at the entrances with historic architectural features that blend into and enhance the community.	Regulatory Action	On-Going

**Town Character Objective 5.1: Continue programs that maintain Terry’s neighborhoods, and identify and develop new ones as feasible.**

Policy	Action	Timing
Continue support for solid waste pick-up in order to keep Terry clean.	Funding Mechanism	On-Going





Initiate and participate in community clean-up days once or twice per year.	Funding Mechanism	Immediate
Initiate and participate in community efforts to plant and maintain street trees.	Funding Mechanism	Immediate
Investigate funding opportunities to update and replace street lighting.	Funding Mechanism	Mid-Term
Support improvements to infrastructure such as streets, sidewalks, sewer, and water system as funds and maintenance capabilities allow.	Funding Mechanism	On-Going
<b>Town Character Objective 5.2: Develop historic districts.</b>		
<b>Policy</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timing</b>
Investigate public support for the designation of historic districts.	Detailed Planning Effort	Long-Term
Create one or more historic districts if interest is sufficient.	Detailed Planning Effort	Long-Term
<b>Town Character Objective 5.3: Develop mechanisms that prevent the degradation of Terry's neighborhoods from the introduction of incompatible uses.</b>		
<b>Policy</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timing</b>
Identify areas for land uses that will support Terry's economy, yet provide separation of uses that could be incompatible because of public health, safety, the general welfare.	Regulatory Action	Immediate
<b>Town Amenities Objective 1.1: Maintain and improve existing parks in Terry.</b>		
<b>Policy</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timing</b>
The city park and pool should be given a high priority in capital improvements planning.	Detailed Planning Effort	Immediate
	Funding Mechanism	On-Going



**Town Amenities Objective 1.2: Develop recreational opportunities in the badlands and surrounding countryside that provide activities for current residents, attract potential residents, and draw visitors from outside the area.**

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timing</b>
Partner with MTFWP, the BLM, and Prairie County to develop a public river access and boat launch on the Yellowstone River adjacent to Highway 253.	Intergovernmental Cooperation  Policy Decision	Mid-Term
Support the Prairie County Economic Development Council's efforts regarding the Calypso Trail and other recreational opportunities.	Policy Decision	On-Going
Support local recreation associations and clubs that work to improve the conditions of and access to natural and cultural features in and around Terry.	Policy Decision	On-Going

**Town Amenities Objective 1.3: Improve public facilities and public gathering spaces in Terry.**

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timing</b>
Support the maintenance of parks.	Funding Mechanism  Policy Decision	On-Going
Identify an underutilized property in the downtown area that is high profile and could be used as a public gathering space for community events, farmers markets, and other public activities. Investigate the feasibility of creating such a space.	Detailed Planning Effort	Long-Term



**People Objective 1.1: Maintain and improve community character and implement beautification projects.**

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timing</b>
Support the efforts of community organizations to maintain or improve unique and/or historic events, buildings, as well as public and private spaces that benefit the entire community.	Policy Decision	On-Going
Encourage youth volunteerism in a variety of activities within the Terry Public School system and various local clubs..	Policy Decision Intergovernmental Cooperation	On-Going
Support the school district in its efforts to maintain, improve and develop its facilities and encourage these facilities be open to the public as scheduling allows.	Policy Decision Intergovernmental Cooperation	On-Going

**People Objective 1.2: Expand opportunities for life-long learning for adults and children beyond, or outside, the K-12 system.**

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timing</b>
Support the Prairie County Library, Prairie County Museum, Evelyn Cameron Heritage, Inc., MSU Extension Service, and all other such organizations offering educational opportunities.	Policy Decision Intergovernmental Cooperation	On-Going

**People Objective 1.3: Prioritize, promote, and protect historic and cultural resources.**

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timing</b>
Continue efforts to implement the 2012 Terry Heritage Tourism Action Plan.	Policy Decision	On-Going
Protect and promote cultural attractions such as the Old Milwaukie Bridge and scenic views of the badlands from town.	Policy Decision	On-Going



Maintain Terry's designation as the Home of the Evelyn Cameron Gallery and a Preserve America Community.	Policy Decision	On-Going
<b>People Objective 2.1: Develop mechanisms that guarantee landowners and all residents of Terry the rights of due process and equal treatment.</b>		
<b>Policy</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timing</b>
Preserve the right of existing uses to be maintained and expanded as appropriate.	Regulatory Action	Immediate
Allow exceptions from regulations in situations where a hardship is present, and when in accordance with standards that are equally applied, do not contradict the intent of the regulation and are in accordance with state law.	Regulatory Action	Immediate
Provide the public opportunities to participate in land use decisions.	Regulatory Action	Immediate
Decisions by the governing body affecting land use should be made in an open and public setting.	Regulatory Action	Immediate



# Subdivision Review

Section 76-3-608 of the Montana Code Annotated requires subdivision regulations address these primary review criteria:

- Agriculture
- Agriculture User Facilities
- Local Services
- Effect on the Natural Environment
- Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat
- Public Health and Safety

## ***Agriculture***

Agriculture is defined as: “The cultivation or tilling of soil for the purpose of producing vegetative materials for sale or for use in a commercial operation and/or the raising or tending of animals for commercial sale or use.” Agriculture does not include gardening for personal use, keeping of house pets, or landscaping for aesthetic purposes.

Terry’s history and economy have deep ties to agriculture. Much of the land area within the immediate vicinity of town is involved in agricultural production, varying by type and intensity. There may be areas within the Town limits where uses consistent with the definition of agriculture are appropriate; however, most of the town – due to existing land uses – is not appropriate for agriculture. As Terry grows, it is important that growth and development consider the deep ties the community has to agricultural producers. Subdividers should limit the impacts to agriculture through careful site planning and efforts to avoid conflicts by taking measures such as controlling noxious weeds and providing building setbacks from agricultural operations when deemed necessary.

## ***Agriculture User Facilities***

Agricultural water user facilities are defined as: “Those facilities which provide water for irrigation and stock watering to agricultural lands and include, but are not limited to, ditches, pipes, and other water conveying facilities.”





It is the intent of the Town of Terry to allow for growth and development in a manner that will not impede the flow of irrigation water to surrounding properties. During the review of subdivision proposals on lands where water courses exist, the subdivider will be required to demonstrate that irrigation flows to other lands will not be impeded by the development project. Typically providing easements and a statement from irrigation officials that water flows will not be disrupted by the proposed development project will suffice. In cases where land to be subdivided is supplied irrigation water and where the water rights will be transferred to the lots, a lot owners association should generally be created to manage the water. However, all subdivision proposals on land with irrigation water courses will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

## ***Local Services***

Local services are defined as: “All services provided by governmental or non-governmental entities that are deemed to be necessary to maintain basic living standards.” These services include fire and police protection, medical services, water supplies, wastewater conveyance and treatment, stormwater management, streets and sidewalks, electrical power, telecommunications, parks, schools, libraries and solid waste facilities.

Capacity and capability in local services is limited. All development should equitably participate in providing adequate services for itself, including replacement of consumed reserve capacity. Response times, physical space within facilities, compliance with facility plans, and general design of appropriate facilities should be addressed during the preliminary plat review and all necessary mitigation should be provided by the subdivider.

Subdividers should be required to demonstrate that all local services are available in sufficient capacity and quality to support the future occupants and users of their proposed projects. Typically such documentation consists of letters of review by the responsible agencies and service providers stating that the services are sufficient to support the future development. Where significant questions exist regarding the availability and capacity of certain services, a developer may be required to pay for the costs associated with hiring qualified, independent persons or firms to evaluate the existing local services and state what, if any, upgrades, expansions, or mitigation measures are necessary to support the proposed development project in a manner that will not result in diminishing services for established users.



## ***Natural Environment***

The natural environment is defined as: “The physical conditions which exist within a given area, including land, water, mineral, flora, fauna, noise, light, and objects of historic or aesthetic significance.”

A subdivision proposal may have an unacceptable effect on the natural environment when after review and fact finding, the project is found likely to jeopardize the existing environmental quality in the area. Where significant questions exist regarding the potential impacts of a development project on the natural environment, a developer may be required to pay for the costs associated with hiring one or more qualified, independent persons or firms to evaluate the existing environmental quality, potential impacts and state what, if any, mitigation measures may be appropriate.

## ***Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat***

Wildlife is defined as: “Animals that are neither human, domesticated, nor feral descendants of commonly domesticated animals; wildlife habitat means the place or type of habitat where wildlife naturally thrives.”

It is expected that subdivisions within the existing Town Limits will have little effect on wildlife or wildlife habitat because of the existing land uses and population densities. New developments outside of the current town boundaries have a potential for wildlife conflicts and impacting habitat. When significant questions exist regarding the potential impacts of a development project on wildlife and wildlife habitat, a developer may be required to pay the costs of hiring qualified, independent persons or firms evaluating the existing habitat values, potential impacts and state what, if any, mitigation measures may be appropriate.

## ***Public Health and Safety***

Public health and safety is defined as: “A condition of optimal well-being, free from danger or injury, for a community at large, as well as for an individual or small group of persons.”

The following presumptions apply during subdivision review:

- 1) Health is a comprehensive subject, and threats to health include chronic as well as acute hazards.



2) The creation of hazards to public health and safety are not acceptable and appropriate mitigation must be provided.

3) Some level of risk is present in all locations and times despite efforts to prevent harm. Individual developments are not solely responsible for the correction of risks which are common to all. They should equitably participate in common solutions to common problems. However, the presence of common risks, such as inadequate public services, may prevent approval of a development until the hazard has been removed or corrected.

MCA 76-3-510 permits a local government to require a subdivider to pay for all of the costs necessary to extend capital facilities related to public health and safety, including but not limited to, public roads, sewer lines, water lines and storm drains. When significant questions exist regarding the potential impacts of a development project on public health and safety, a developer may be required to pay for the costs associated with hiring qualified, independent persons or firms to evaluate the existing habitat values, potential impacts and stating what, if any, mitigation measures may be appropriate.

## Procedure for Conducting Public Hearings on Proposed Subdivisions

The Terry Planning Board and Terry Council should use the following procedure during public hearings regarding subdivision proposals:

- Notice of the public hearing should be published and / or posted according to state law.
- The presiding officer should announce the purpose and subject of the hearing.
- The presiding officer should determine whether public notice of the hearing was provided. If proper notice was not provided, the hearing should be re-scheduled.
- The presiding officer should ask if any member wishes to declare a conflict of interest in the matter to be heard, and excuse anyone who declares such a conflict from participating in the hearing. Any excused party may voice comment on the matter as a member of the public but not a voting member of the board.
- In the event that a majority of Planning Board members are not present, a public meeting may proceed out of respect to the developer and those in attendance, although the official public hearing will be held by the governing body.



- The presiding officer should ask the subdivision administrator (typically a staff person or a contracted planner) to present a report on the proposal being considered.
- The presiding officer should direct questions from board members to the administrator. Such questions should be for the purpose of clarifying the facts surrounding the proposal.
- The presiding officer should remind those present that all statements must address the merits of the proposed project as measured by its compliance or lack of compliance with the Terry Growth Policy, Subdivision Regulations, Zoning Ordinance or other rules, regulations, or ordinances.
- The presiding officer should request a statement from the developer or a representative. Board members may ask questions of the developer or representative.
- The presiding officer should ask for statements from members of the public. All public comments should be directed to the board and individuals must identify themselves by name. The board may ask questions of members of the public.
- In order to allow all parties the opportunity to speak and to ensure completion of the agenda, time limits may be set on individual comments.
- When all statements have been given, the presiding officer should ask anyone who has given a statement, including the developer or a representative, if they wish to rebut or clarify statements that have been given. Board members may ask questions following each statement.
- The presiding officer should close the public hearing and call for a discussion between board members. Board members have the opportunity to discuss the proposal and any mitigation measures with the administrator, the developer or a representative.
- The board should make a recommendation for approval, approval subject to conditions, or denial. Any conditions of approval or a denial recommendation must be supported by findings of fact and materials reasons stating the basis for the conditions or the negative recommendation.
- Written statements, plans, photographs and other material offered in support of statements should be retained by the Town in accordance with its record keeping policy.



# Process for Review and Amendments

## ***Review***

Montana Code Annotated requires growth policies to be reviewed every five (5) years. This does not mean the growth policy must be amended every five years, but that it should be reviewed to determine if amendments are necessary. Every five years following the adoption of the growth policy, the Planning Board should review the goals, objectives, and policies to see if they are still relevant, as well as to determine what has been accomplished and to re-focus priorities. After each decennial census it will also be helpful to see what demographic changes, if any, have taken place. With these reviews it will be clear whether amendments are necessary. Below is a list of questions that could lead to a revision of the growth policy:

- Are the community's goals, objectives, and policies current and valid?
- Have the community conditions or legal framework substantially changed?
- Where have problems appeared since the last review?
- Does the plan meet the current needs of the community?
- Should this plan be modified to better serve the needs and desires of the community?

## ***Amendments***

From time to time, amendments to the growth policy may be needed. Amendments must follow the procedures of Section 76-1-604 Montana Code Annotated. All amendments must have a public hearing held by the Planning Board, where a resolution is drafted and forwarded to the Town Council. The Council, at its discretion, can hold a public hearing on the amendments, or Council can forego the hearing and pass a resolution of intent to adopt the amendment, adopt with changes, or deny the amendment. Following the passage of a resolution of intent, the council will give the public 30 days to submit comments. Following the 30 day comment period, the council may pass a final resolution.

In addition to the amendment process above, the public through a referendum may amend the growth policy.

